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THE RELATION

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THE APOSTOLIC TEACHING

TO

THE TEACHING OF CHRIST

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TEACHING OF CHRIST

BEING THE KERR LECTURES FOR 1900

BY

REV. ROBERT J. DRUMMOND, B.D.

LOTHIAN ROAD CHURCH, EDINBURGH

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THE KERR LECTURESHIP

THE "KERR LECTURESHIP" was founded by the TRUSTEES of the late Miss JOAN KERR, of Sanquhar, under her Deed of Settlement, and formally adopted by the United Presbyterian Synod in May 1886. In the following year, May 1887, provisions and conditions of the Lectureship, as finally adjusted, were adopted by the Synod, and embodied in a Memorandum, printed in the Appendix to the Synod Minutes, p. 489. From these the following excerpts are here given :—

II. The amount to be invested shall be £3000.

III. The object of the Lectureship is the promotion of the study of Scientific Theology in the United Presbyterian Church.

The Lectures shall be upon some such subjects as the following, viz.:—

A. Historic Theology—

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Farther, the Committee of Selection shall from time to time, as they think fit, appoint as the subject of the Lectures any important Phases of Modern Religious Thought or Scientific Theories in their bearing upon Evangelical Theology. The Committee may also appoint a subject connected with the practical work of the Ministry as subject of Lecture, but in no case shall this be admissible more than once in every five appointments.

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VI. The Lecturer shall hold the appointment for three years.

VIII. The Lectures shall be published at the Lecturer's own expense within one year after their delivery.

IX. The Lectures shall be delivered to the students of the United Presbyterian Hall.

XII. The Public shall be admitted to the Lectures.

PREFACE

THIS book consists of the lectures delivered, under the Kerr Lectureship, to the Students of the United Presbyterian Theological Hall in the last session of its separate existence, 1899–1900, and prior to its union with the Free Church Halls in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen. The Lectureship takes its name from that of the late Miss Joan Kerr, of Sanquhar, and was founded by her disinterested Trustees, the Rev. David B. Croom, M.A., and his brothers, Dr. J. Halliday Croom and James M. Croom, Esq., the worthy sons of their honoured father, the late Rev. David M. Croom, of Lauriston Place Church, Edinburgh, and all of them presbyters of the United Presbyterian Church. It has already, in the previous lectures, fulfilled the intentions and hopes of the founders. And under new and necessarily changed conditions it will continue to encourage the studious spirit of younger ministers of the Church.

The subject of the present course is of supreme importance, and claims a large share of attention at the present day. What of inadequacy its treatment suffers from here is largely due to the preparation of the work amid the stress of a heavy pastoral charge. But it

may be some small compensation that the conceptions of New Testament truth presented have at least been subjected to the sifting test of their practical efficacy for meeting the spiritual perplexities and needs of many types of men.

The Author desires to acknowledge with gratitude the forbearance and encouraging aid he has received from his congregation and office-bearers during the preparation of the work.

R. J. D.

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THE RELATION OF THE APOSTOLIC TEACHING TO THE TEACHING OF CHRIST

CHAPTER I

The Literary Sources

Subject of Study — Its Importance — A Study in New Testament Theology—Methods of New Testament Theology: Analysis and Synthesis—Present Conditions favourable to Study: Agreements as to Date, Authorship, and Substance of the various Types of Teaching—Outline of Course of Study—Features of New Testament Writings: Occasional, comprehensive, practical and not theological, disproportionate, early recognised—Order of Appearance: James; Paul; 1 Peter, Hebrews, Apocalypse, and Synoptic Gospels and Acts; John's Gospel and Epistles—Meaning of the Order as a whole —Meaning of the Order of Paul's Epistles—Are these Writings reliable Sources for Christ's own Teaching?—Why so little reference to Christ's earthly career in Paul's Epistles?—Is it so?—Reasons for chief emphasis on Death and Resurrection—Christ's Teaching includes more than His Words.

The subject of the present study is the relation of the Apostolic Teaching to the Teaching of Christ—the relation, that is, of the first Christian school to its Master. The material for the study lies within the boards of the New Testament. There a record is preserved of what Christ taught, and of what was taught by those who either received that teaching direct from His lips or from the lips of men

who had heard Him. In the title, Apostolic is used to include all the teaching in the New Testament other than that of Christ Himself. And our task is to determine the relation of the teaching thus designated to Christ's own.

A satisfactory answer to the questions which this involves should help to a correct estimate of the now hackneyed, but once catching, cry, "Back to Christ." It will take us over the proper way of return to Christ. That cannot be successfully achieved by a blind leap over the intervening space. To ignore, as such a proceeding would do, the impression produced by Christ and by the words which He uttered upon the very first minds that received His teaching, would be to forego a very valuable source of evidence as to what Jesus actually did teach. Of course, it might appear, on investigation, that those who first heard Him, and who first committed His teaching to writing, were so incapable of understanding Him, were so preoccupied with their own prejudices and preconceived opinions, had introduced so much of their own views into what purported to be His teaching, and were so hopelessly at variance among themselves, that no reliance could be placed upon what they said until it had been subjected to very careful sifting and editing. But, on the other hand, if it should appear that Jesus Himself always anticipated that His teaching should reach the vast mass of mankind through other lips than His own, always anticipated that it would only be perfectly understood in the light of His completed life and work, and, in view of this, selected and trained a special body of men, to whom He promised such spiritual reinforcement as would enable them fully to discharge the task, it is simply to ignore the guiding of the teacher, to whom we are bidden return, if we treat the teachings of these men as of comparatively little significance. We possess the teaching of Jesus only at second hand. He wrote nothing. He left it to His disciples to select what

they would transmit, what suffer to lapse into oblivion. We are dependent on one section of them, the Evangelists, for a statement of what He said and did. Another section, out of their own experience of the effects which He produced by His life and teaching upon themselves, and through them upon other men, give us a vivid picture of the spiritual forces He set in operation. And it is the barest truth to say that we can only get back to Christ by way of the school which He gathered around Him and first impressed.

The present subject is thus a study in New Testament Theology. It is treated more or less in all the standard works that overtake the whole field in that department. And almost every treatise dealing with the teaching of individual writers or books of the New Testament contains a collation of the particular view dealt with and the cognate teaching of Christ. But what has thus been treated incidentally or fragmentarily is here the subject of independent and exclusive study.

The prevailing method in the study of New Testament Theology, since that became a separate discipline, has been that of analysis of the separate strands of New Testament teaching. This method was partly a necessity, partly a protest. There was a feeling that the scholastic theologians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had shown a fatal indifference to the variety of the types of teaching, had failed to discriminate what came from one source and what from another, had supported their dogmatic structures with props, taken at will from any quarter, without in the least considering the relation of these sources to one another, or even recognising their separate existence. All were treated as if they were unquestionably at one on all points. Now there was, and there is, need to guard against this excessive unification of the separate elements in our New Testament. It is a mistake to overlook the

fact that we have our record of early Christian belief and life from a number of men who have left in their writings marked traces of their individuality, and whose variety of nature and disposition is of great value for letting us see the play of colour on Christian truth. The light comes to us through a prism. And we can only feel thankful for the results that have been secured for the enjoyment of the wealth of Christian truth by the patient study of those who have shown us how the thoughts vary of James and Peter and John. Indiscriminate appeal, now to one and now to another, reduced the authors to ciphers, and the charm of personality was lost. Truth might be reached, but it stood forth bald and gaunt. It lost the living influence imparted, when it is seen as the throbbing heart-thought of eager men, sharing each his best loved gift with his fellows.

But analysis may be overdone. It may become dissection and anatomy, and leave us only a disintegrated corpse. It may forget that the several rays depend on a common pencil of light, and hence are not so much contrasts as complements, which will never be properly understood or appreciated except as such. So much may be made of the differences, that everything else lapses into comparative neglect, and men are tempted to forget the far more general and predominant agreement. Points strongly insisted upon for particular reasons in certain portions of an author's writings come to be treated as if they had a preponderating and pervasive influence throughout his views of truth, and are mistaken for the whole man, until there is need, for instance, for Weizsäcker's reminder, that "that Christian theology, conditioned by the law, which we know as Pauline doctrine, is not the whole Paul."[1] The emphasis laid on the differences is sometimes intentional, with a view to demonstrate the existence of deep-seated and fundamental antagonism between different types of

[1] *Apostolic Age*, i. 373 f.

Christian teaching. But the effect is produced even when not intended, and the mere study of each type of teaching —Synoptic, Johannine, Petrine, Pauline—by itself, though careful attention is given to what is included as well as to what is omitted in each, leaves the impression that the differences are greater than the agreements; that our New Testament is made up of a mass of heterogeneous fragments, which only fond weakness can harmonise into a whole. It is important, therefore, that an attempt be made to group the whole together again, to look at the different parts quite as much in their agreements as in their divergences, and, while avoiding anything like procrustean trimming of refractory members, to see how far differences are only variations on the same theme, or legitimate developments of a common seed-thought.

What makes an attempt in this direction hopeful at the present time is that some points of pretty general agreement have been arrived at. Of course this statement is to be taken with reservations in reference to each point. But granting these, there is a fair consensus of opinion in reference at once to the date and authorship of the New Testament writings, and to the substance of the teaching of Jesus and of His apostles. Of this we may take advantage for our purpose. It will save us the necessity of going into minutiæ of Introduction before appealing to an Epistle as Pauline, or a Gospel as Lukan. And I shall content myself with noting what is the general agreement on the points mentioned.

As to date, apart from the extravagances of the recent Dutch school in their attack on the four great Pauline Epistles, which have been thoroughly studied, and successfully exposed and answered in this country by Knowling in his *Witness of the Epistles*, a book otherwise very valuable for the study of our subject, there is a general disposition to accept Harnack's recent deliverances on the dates of the

New Testament writings.[1] Or rather, men are agreed in recognising the significance of the limits within which he insists the most of the books of the New Testament must have originated. Practically, they must all have taken shape within the first Christian century. Those to which, according to Harnack, this remark does not apply, are either, like Second Peter or Jude, of no vital importance to our study, or else, like the Epistle of James, on strong grounds ably argued by other men, are reasonably included within it. There has been a steady withdrawal from the later dates of the Tübingen school towards the traditional positions. And we are free to regard the literature of the New Testament as the literature of the first and second generations after the death and resurrection of our Lord.

But, as Caspari has well shown,[2] this admission warrants a very much bolder attitude as to the authorship of these books. It is very easy to deny the traditional authorship of the Gospels, or of books hitherto regarded as Johannine or Pauline, if you can show that they could not have been written in the lifetime of the reputed authors. But when, on other grounds, they are referred to dates at which these men were probably alive, and when they possess features which harmonise with the reputed authorship, what ground is there for denying the authorship, especially if the writing be the solitary work from the reputed author, or if it be a group of writings all possessing marked, common characteristics, or only such divergent features as are quite consistent with various sides of character, or with varying conditions of issue, known to exist for the supposed author? Why deny, say, the authorship of the Gospel, known by his name, to Matthew, when it quite corresponds with what is known of him, and is the only work ascribed to him? What criteria can justify it? There are none. Or why refuse even to

[1] *Altchristliche Litteratur*, iii, x. xi.
[2] *American Journal of Theology*, July 1898.

accept the Apocalypse as from the author of the Gospel and Epistles of John? The difference of style? That is due, in any case, to the difference of subject. You cannot imagine an Apocalypse written in the style of the First Epistle of John. But, besides, under the calm surface of the Epistle of the devout old man, in which he writes lovingly and sublimely of his beloved, well-remembered Master with whom he still lives in daily spiritual fellowship, a rumble of the old spirit, that would have called down fire to destroy the inhospitable villagers, is heard in those hot outbursts against the man who denies Christ come in the flesh, or who professes to love God and hates, or is indifferent to, his brother. "He's a liar," he cries, "he's a liar!" That vehement spirit *could* write the Apocalypse. There must be strong reasons against the common tradition to prove that he did not.[1] And so we may say that there is sufficient agreement as to the authorship of most of the works of the New Testament to justify taking advantage of what is known of their authors, in order to help in understanding the works they have produced.

There is, in the main, agreement as to what constitutes the substance of the various types of New Testament teaching. New Testament theology has had the good fortune to be worked over by a succession of men of very marked individuality and of rare sympathetic instinct. The result is a fair amount of common understanding as to the salient features of each writer. Reuss with his graphic genius, Weiss with his extraordinary diligence and minuteness of detail, Beyschlag with his warmth and candour, Weizsäcker in whose hands the old events and move-

[1] Weizsäcker admits points of affinity strong enough to identify both Apocalypse and Gospel with the same place, Ephesus. *Apostolic Age*, ii. 171. As to the variety of style, the contrast is not greater than that between the controversial writings and the Letters of Samuel Rutherford, "the fiercest of Church leaders and the most devout of saints," or between the utterances of the impetuous antagonist of Abelard and fiery preacher of the second Crusade, and those of the holy mystic of the commentary on Canticles, Bernard of Clairvaux.

ments of thought seem to pass anew before one's eyes, Holtzmann with his delicate sense for outside influences, Baur and Pfleiderer in their exhaustive study of Paul, and Wendt in his great work on the *Teaching of Jesus*, amid all their diversity bear out what I say. As one reads their writings and the works of the host of scholars whom they have inspired to follow into detail each phase and feature of New Testament thought, probing to their origins or tracing down their course, the conviction grows that distinct aspects of truth have specially captivated individual exponents and dominated their thought. And while there may be great diversity of opinion as to how these divergences of view have originated, or how they are mutually related to each other, there is comparatively little difference of opinion as to what each author thought and taught. The ground is therefore so far prepared for a consideration of the relation that exists between them, and especially between the subordinate members of the school and Him whom they agreed in regarding as their common Master.

It will give clearness to the subsequent course of this study, if at this point there is indicated in outline the order to be followed. The remainder of this chapter will deal with the literary sources, and the suggestions which the probable order of their appearance gives of the trend of thought in the Early Church as to the essence of the teaching of Christ. The second will discuss the members of Christ's school, and the opinion which Christ entertained of their teaching, and they of His and of Him. The third will set forth the features of Christ's teaching, and their parallel in the teaching of His followers. These three chapters are general and introductory, and prepare for the treatment of the substance of the teaching. And here, after a discussion of the commonly recognised object of Christ's mission, salvation, and the common presup-

positions which it involved, we shall take up, in turn, the great topics of Christ's own teaching in the order in which He stated them, which is also the order of progress from more obvious general agreement to more or less apparent divergence, viz. the kingdom of God, or the religio-ethical society in which salvation is realised, the Messiah, the Cross, and the Throne. Then comes a subject which is collateral with these, the relation which men are called on to assume towards them, namely, faith. Finally, a closing chapter will gather up results. This arrangement, which groups the teaching into a sort of systematic whole under the leadership of the teaching of Christ Himself, has been adopted, rather than a series of isolated discussions of separate matters of dispute, in order to emphasise the substantial unity and harmony of the whole body of New Testament teaching, and to avoid leaving the impression that it consists simply of fragmentary ill-digested views on a few subjects with regard to which there is comparatively little in common among the various teachers.

To come back, then, to the literary sources, it may be well to notice some general features of all these New Testament writings, which it is important to bear in mind throughout our study. And first of all, they are occasional writings. They are written by their authors without pre-concerted plan or premeditation. Each book appeared just as occasion demanded, and as each writer in turn felt called upon, by the circumstances of the day and by his own responsibilities in reference to them, either from special connection with a particular section of the community or from special impulse from God's Holy Spirit in his own heart, to utter his voice for holiness and truth. They are not a set of treatises, projected by their writers met in solemn conclave, and designed to provide a complete presentation of Christian truth, each department

being treated by a specialist. Still less are they manifestoes of rival schools in a war of pamphlets. There is nothing in them analogous to a set of Handbooks for Bible Classes, or an International Theological Library. They are simply writings to meet the spiritual needs of the day in which they appeared.

And yet they succeed, in a very remarkable degree, in covering the ground of the fundamental facts and truths of the Christian faith. For, while they are occasional writings, the occasions that called them forth were all more or less significant, and involved appeal to fundamental principles. In this way every document becomes the treatment of some important subject. And a definite advance has been made in an intelligent grasp of the nature of the New Testament books, when this has been recognised. It then becomes evident that it is a mistake to regard any book, indiscriminately, as a legitimate source from which to expect instruction on every aspect of Christian truth. Each is seen to have its proper subject, with which it is chiefly concerned. To other subjects its references are incidental, or in so far as these may be affected by the main subject in hand. Thus the Epistle to the Galatians, dealing chiefly with the relationship of the Gentiles to the Jewish law, is not a document in which one will look for a detailed exposition of the last things; nor is it to be expected that a letter like that to the Colossians, devoted to the wider and larger issues and reaches of the mediatorial position and work of Christ, will enter at length on the more primary and individual aspects of it. Each book keeps to its own subject and deals primarily with that, and our estimate of it as an index of the measure of its author's acquaintance with, and views on, other matters, must be largely determined by that consideration.

But even in the treatment of subjects, it is necessary to

remember that in no case is a New Testament writing a purely theological treatise. Not one is the work of a theorist, writing from a merely scientific interest, or from a scholar's desire to elucidate a subject. Every one is written from a strong practical motive. The Gospels, for instance, are not mere histories, written simply to chronicle certain occurrences. And this has been made a cause of complaint. Von Soden, whose proof[1] of their practical aim is most able, is a case in point. He shows the motives that led to their compilation, but only to turn round and complain that these motives militate against their claim to absolute credence. But why? Surely it is no proof that a man is unworthy of credence, that he has some practical object in view in writing a page of history. If so, who is to be trusted? Where is the pure historian, ruled by such a purely historic interest? The very selection of a certain event for narration shows that the recorder thinks that it rather than others should be remembered. If a man to-day writes a history of the Reformation, say, it shows that, for one reason or another, he thinks the events of that time are worthy of the special attention of the men of the present day. But the fact that the writer has an object in view does not make him unreliable. And when, as in our Gospels, men are writing under the spell of Him who was the Truth, and impelled by the desire to let others know of Him, is not that of itself a guarantee of their good faith, a purifying reagent embedded in the theme? These Gospels are records of the life of Jesus. But still more are they the record of the subtle influence which fell from Jesus upon the mind of the author of each, and led him to see in the subject of his sketch the Saviour of his soul.

[1] *Theologische Abhandlungen* Carl von Weizsäcker *gewidmet; Das Interesse des Apostolischen Zeitalters an der evangelischen Geschichte*, von H. von Soden, p. 111 ff.

In what he has discovered in Christ for himself, from what he has heard of Him, he feels he has the material for a testimony that will tell on the lives of other men, and secure a like result there. This impels him to write; but it also ensures his truthfulness, though his aim is practical, and not simply historical. Or take the First Epistle of John, and it is the same. There, under the two aspects of "God is Light" and "God is Love," a wonderful doctrine of God is presented, and of the relationship in which men stand to Him. But the anxiety of the author never is merely to elaborate his subject, or exhaust it in all its bearings. If he does achieve this in any direction, he is not content to stop short with his exposition. He wishes above all else to bring men to personal appropriation of the truths which he teaches, and thus to the enjoyment of the blessings which they embody. Even the great Epistle to the Romans, the most like a theological treatise of them all, was written to serve a practical end. And to fail to recognise that, is to close the book at the end of the eleventh chapter. What Reuss says of the discourses of Jesus is true of the writings of all His followers: "They ought never to be made the subject of a purely scientific and historic study. They are designed for religious and earnest meditation . . . to understand, we must begin by practising them."[1]

On the other hand, in order to deal fairly with them where their views appear divergent, it is imperative to notice that we possess their work in very unequal proportions. For one Epistle of James and a single speech in the Acts, we have thirteen Epistles of Paul and speech after speech from his lips. Peter's writings are scarcely longer than the shortest letter of Paul to a single Church. Matthew and Mark give us only a Gospel each; Luke, a Gospel and a stage of history; while John appears in most varied form with an Apocalypse, Epistles, and a Gospel. Still

[1] Reuss, *History of Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age*, i. 132.

more, the most voluminous of them is meagre and incomplete. No one of them attempts to give a complete statement of his views. As we have seen, their writings are occasional. While what they do say, therefore, when looked at in the light of the circumstances of the utterances, is of value, as telling what they did think and teach, their silence on any point indicates scarcely anything. No argument is here more precarious. It is simply absurd, as Wrede well insists,[1] from the few chapters which we possess of James and of Peter, to construct *Lehrbegriffe*, systems of doctrine, with strongly marked features, and presenting sharp contrasts to Paul or John. If we possessed as many letters of Peter, or of James, as we do of Paul, or such a variety of style of book from Paul as from John, we might do so with more reason, though very probably we should then find most of the acutest divergences disappear. And this is no fond fancy of a partisan, as if the result might presumably be just as decidedly the other way. It could not. The existence, side by side, of the various writings, which do present some differences of view and statement, indicates clearly that those who preserved them regarded them as from men, not in antagonism with one another, but in substantial agreement, whose writings are complementary to one another. And so it will not do to ask us to believe that Paul was a kind of *rara avis*, little understood by his contemporaries, propounding opinions that were entertained and grasped by practically nobody but himself.[2] Had that been so, his letters would never have survived. No Church would have thought them worth preserving. His opinions would have died with himself, and been buried in oblivion. Their existence, and that in far prepon-

[1] Wrede, *Ueber Aufgabe und Methode der sogenannten Neutestamentlichen Theologie*, § 2.

[2] Harnack, *History of Dogma*, i. 89 f., 95; H. J. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 490, etc.

derating numbers, among the cherished treasures of the Early Church, shows clearly that in him we have a generally accepted exponent of common Christian truths, and suggests that to his main positions the men who are set side by side with him, and utter their voices on other matters but are silent where he has spoken, by their silence give consent.[1] This conviction will not prevent us recognising to the full the particular aspects of truth which particular circumstances have induced individual men to treat with special emphasis. But it will bid us pause, before we pronounce a common view absolutely incompatible as between any two of these men.

It is further to be remembered that these writings very early attained a position of general recognition, as presenting a fairly complete statement of the essentials of Christ's religion. This is of importance when we are considering their significance and determinative value for fixing the essentials of the faith. It is very easy for us to accept or repel, say this is fundamental, that of no moment, this has only the support of a quite subordinate Epistle, that of a book that is scarcely entitled to a place in the Canon, and therefore may be allowed to pass out of notice. But without claiming any divine authority for the Canon, or any special guidance for the Council which fixed it, the fact remains that these books, out of a large number, secured the recognition of the Early Church. These, from a time long before the Canon was thought of, as is proved, for instance, in the case of the Gospels by the existence so soon of such a work as Tatian's *Diatessaron*, were regarded as the books from which to learn the truth of the Christian religion. At a very early stage, when changes were beginning to appear, these were fixed on as reliable guides to a proper knowledge of Jesus and His truth.

[1] Cf. Mair, *Expositor*, 5th series, vi. 241, "The Modern Overestimate of Paul's Relation to Christianity."

These writings appeared at intervals during a period of about forty or fifty years (A.D. 45–A.D. 95), and in the following order. The earliest is the Epistle of James. It is either that, or else a very late production, and it is a question of the explanation to be given to certain striking features of the Epistle, on which the advocates of late and early theory alike are agreed. There is, first, its strong affinity with the attitude of an exalted and purified Judaism; there is, second, the absence of any strikingly Christian theological positions; there is, third, its reference to a state of persecution as existent. But what is the bearing of all this? Is it a proof that this is really a Jewish work, with the name of Christ interpolated, and therefore of late date? Is it a proof that this was a polemic against the views of Paul from the strongly Jewish standpoint within the Christian community? Is it not rather evidence that this is a work belonging to a stage when the Christian Church had scarcely realised the extent of difference between itself and Judaism, caused by the acceptance of Jesus as the Christ? Is not Ramsay right in his explanation of the note of persecution, when he points out that Jewish Christians were liable to persecution at the hands of their Jewish kinsmen at a time when no persecution had as yet reached the Gentiles? And even in the famous "faith" passage, to find only antagonism to Paul, is to overlook the strong affinity there is between the teaching there and the teaching in Paul's early Epistles. In those to the Thessalonians the seeming contrast with Romans is just as marked as in James's Epistle. Thessalonians and James alike have to attack a phase of thought and life in which faith was made a plea for indolence and sorning, and they attack it on the same lines. They belong, therefore, to the same stage of Christian development. And the teaching of James on faith became so far determinative for the Christian Church. His point once

settled, it becomes a well-understood element in the Christian conception of faith; and when new questions arise as to its range and power, it is, for instance, by Paul taken for granted. The Epistle is thus early, and the work of its traditional author, the brother of our Lord.

Next in order comes the great group of Pauline Epistles; and, apart from a question which is not of vital moment to us, and need not be more than mentioned, as to the exact place of the Epistle to the Galatians, the order is, the Epistles to the Thessalonians; the four great Epistles, those to the Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans; the Epistles of the Captivity; and the Pastoral Epistles. The Epistle to the Ephesians and the three Pastoral Epistles are here included among the writings of Paul, because the trend of evidence is increasingly in that direction. There is no good reason for the rejection of Ephesians. It possesses many of the characteristics of all the Pauline writings. There is marked similarity between it and the Epistle to the Colossians; and, in place of that being an objection, as some have regarded it, when account is taken of the perfectly obvious difference of aim, it is a distinct argument in its favour. It is enough to place it side by side with the Epistle to the Laodiceans, to see the difference between a mere imitation and a second original work on different though cognate lines by one and the same author. The case for the Pastoral Epistles is immensely strengthened by Harnack's admission of the presence of genuine Pauline elements in them. With that admission in hand, and the growing favour for the view that Paul was released after his first trial, and endured a second captivity which issued in his martyrdom, there is sufficient ground for those who are satisfied of the unity of each of the individual letters, to maintain still their Pauline authorship.

Following on the Epistles of Paul, come two groups that originated about the same time; on the one hand, and

with slight priority, 1 Peter, Hebrews, and the Apocalypse; and, on the other, the Synoptic Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. In the case of 1 Peter, Professor Ramsay[1] argues for dating it about the year A.D. 80. He combines this with the view, for which he has a great deal to say, that Peter was the author, and lived in Rome till long after the Neronian persecution. Others date the Epistle earlier, though from its similarity to the Epistle of James, Romans, and Ephesians they place it later than these. Probably all that can really be contended for is the personal acquaintance of its author with the authors of these letters, not necessarily with the letters themselves, because the relation is not so much verbal and literary as in the cast of thought; but that does not affect the relative date, and they agree in ascribing it to Peter. No demand on the credulity of the student, therefore, is made if this Epistle is regarded as genuine. The Epistle to the Hebrews is an anonymous work, which bears strong traces of Pauline influence; so strong, indeed, that at times one is constrained to think of it as a kind of conciliatory appeal from the Apostle of the Gentiles to his own countrymen, whom he yearned after so passionately, and left anonymous just that not even his name in it might offend them. But, on the whole, the difference in style and attitude are too strongly marked to justify this view, and we must be content to accept its anonymity. Ménégoz[2] contends, however, on the basis of the internal references, for a date between A.D. 64 and A.D. 67; and this is even more precise than Harnack, who places it between A.D. 65 and A.D. 90. The Apocalypse belongs to about the same period, written probably when the events of the war, which issued in the siege, capture, and sack of Jerusalem, quickened into new vividness the memory of the Neronian persecution. No

[1] *Church in the Roman Empire*, chap. xiii. 279 ff.
[2] *La Théologie de l'Épître aux Hébreux*, Introd. p. 35 ff.

book of the New Testament has been subjected to such a process of disintegration as this, after the manner applied so impartially to the Old Testament throughout. And yet the problem of the Apocalypse is not solved by referring the palpably distinct sections to separate authors. That does not explain the evident unity of aim and purpose of the writer, who brought these sections together, whether he composed them or not. And, on the other hand, there is a subtle affinity of spirit and style among the different parts, which points very decidedly towards a single author. The type of man is just such as is implied in what we learn from the Synoptics of the Apostle John, that intense, passionate, far-seeing, imaginative soul, quick to resent a wrong especially to one he devotedly loved, keen to serve at all costs, and eager to secure the prize that glittered in its magnificence before his unearthly vision.[1] That is quite the kind of man to leave us the dramatic tableaux vivants of the Apocalypse, in which from the events of his own time he illustrates the permanent principles by which the Church of Christ, through recurring conflict and trial, moves on to victory.

About the same time as these three works appeared the Synoptic Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. It is impossible to do more here than allude to the Synoptic problem. But, in the face of Luke's own statements in his introductions, where he definitely records his use of earlier writings, it is quite impossible to dispute his indebtedness to others. He states his strong interests in chronological sequence; and after Professor Ramsay's thorough vindication of the capacity of this writer as a first-class historian,[2] and his argument for his identification with the traditional

[1] Weizsäcker's opinion is striking: "the most natural explanation of its origin is . . . that it came from a primitive apostle who had lived into another period" (*Apostolic Age*, ii. 200).

[2] See *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen*, and *Was Christ born at Bethlehem?*

beloved physician, we need have little hesitation in placing dependence, both in the Gospels and in the Acts, on the accuracy of his record. We can afford to disregard the determined effort of the late Professor Bruce, in his *With Open Face*, to reduce the Gospel to what he calls an "idealised portrait," very pretty, that is to say, but not quite true.[1] What adds weight to Ramsay's testimony is, that his results are quite the reverse of his preconceived impressions. This really reduces the Synoptic problem to a question as to the relation of the Gospels according to Matthew and according to Mark, and there is no doubt that it is a grave difficulty to understand the verbal coincidences, not in quotations, nor in the words of Christ, which is what you would expect, but in the narrative of events, actions, not words. Of course there is this to be said, that the exact correspondences in the record of events is found very largely in a series of set phrases, such as "it came to pass," etc., which are not peculiar to Matthew and Mark, but seem to be the stereotyped setting for Hebrew narrative. There are sections of Old Testament story in which, at many points, the phraseology forms an exact parallel to New Testament story. Or, within the New Testament itself, compare the three accounts of the raising of the daughter of Jairus and that of the raising of Dorcas in the Acts, and it will be seen that, allowing for the difference of the events, there is not more variation in the terminology of the story in the Acts from any one of the three Gospel narratives than there is among themselves. The correspondence in the narrative portions is by no means so exact as a mere cursory recollection might suggest. A reference to the three stories of the Transfiguration, or to the four narratives of the cutting off of the ear of Malchus, will bear this out. Unconsciously stereotyped oral tradition, therefore, may go much further towards the explanation than many are

[1] Cf. pp. 37 f., 58 f., 70 f., 126, 148 *et passim*.

willing to allow. The case is not so impossible as Mr. Badham[1] in his criticism of Mr. Arthur Wright makes it. Yet it would be hasty to say that oral tradition will account for it all. On the other hand, to assume a common, original, written source, or the borrowing of one from another, leaves the difficulty of accounting for inclusions and omissions just as serious as ever. It is wisest still simply to confess our ignorance and await further light. But what must not be forgotten, in the effort to explain the structure of these records, is that behind the events there was a Life, and behind the words a Speaker, who did and said these things so impressively that men never forgot them. These records, too, arose at a date within the lifetime of the men who knew Him, and may very well be the work of the clerk in the Custom House whom He called to His side, and of the cousin of one of His earliest adherents and intimate acquaintance of His two leading followers.

There remain the Gospel and the Epistles of John. These are evidently the works of one writer, and there is no good reason for refusing them to the Apostle John. Harnack has shown that they fall within the range of his lifetime, though he prefers to attribute them to an otherwise unknown friend of the aged apostle, also called John —the Presbyter John. Why, it is difficult to see.[2] They are quite in keeping with what is claimed for them. The Gospel is evidently written in the light of the other three. It assumes their existence, refers to incidents recorded there, and not recorded within itself. And it bears all the marks of being an old man's reminiscences of the never-to-be-forgotten events of his youth, which recur, as such things do to hale old age, with all the freshness of yesterday, and are told with the comments and remarks that changed times

[1] *Critical Review*, viii. 396 ff.

[2] Weizsäcker (*Apostolic Age*, ii. 167), meets Harnack's arguments. His own objections to Johannine authorship are purely *à priori* (*ibid.* ii. 235).

naturally suggest. With this we reach the crown of the teaching, or, if you will, of the record of it.

Now, on the face of it, there is something suggestive in this sequence, apart altogether from the question of authorship. It indicates a crave on the part of men to pass from what Christ effected and what He taught to what He was. The great body of the Pauline Epistles, which stands first, is running over with the vital influences of the Exalted Christ. The Crucified and Risen Saviour is so prominently presented there, that men have treated Paul's energetic assertion, "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him so no more" (2 Cor. v. 16), as if it were a deliberate relegating of the fact of the earthly life of Jesus to the region of the secondary and unimportant. While that, certainly, is not the apostle's meaning, it is nevertheless true that, in the writings of Paul, the facts mainly insisted on are the death and the resurrection. The subject of constant thought and regard is the Exalted Christ. The story of the life, the subject of the great body of oral teaching, is assumed as known. His writings are not samples of the staple of Paul's oral teaching. They are applications of the great facts already communicated by him by word of mouth about the august Personality now exalted to the throne of God, but who is absolutely identical with Him who once lived and spoke in Palestine.

As the number of those who knew Jesus, however, grew fewer as one after another dropped away into the grave, and only records like these Epistles of Paul, which embodied the effects produced by the great mission of Jesus rather than described the motive forces themselves, remained to keep the wondrous story alive, the craving arose for a written narrative of the things Christ said and did.[1] This was met by the production of what we call the

[1] Cf. Von Soden, *op. cit.* p. 165 ff.

Synoptic Gospels. These provided a most vivid picture of the outstanding incidents of the life, together with a copious selection of the most characteristic utterances. As they have come to us, they give us a threefold view of that marvellous Personality. But we must not forget that the separate communities of the early Church were not so well equipped. The possessors of Matthew's Gospel probably knew nothing of Mark or Luke, and those who had Luke probably had not Matthew. And yet it would be a mistake to suppose that they knew no more about Jesus than their one Gospel told them. They had the advantage of what floating oral tradition was in circulation at the time, and it served a purpose to them similar to that afforded to us by our additional writings. These accounts of the life of Jesus gave a background of reality and substance to the thought which gathered around the Exalted Christ. Without them, He would have tended to become what the Hegelian would like to make of Him, simply the embodiment of an idea, a name, which each individual could associate with any conceptions which his imagination might suggest.[1] The Gospels tell us what His character really was, what His favourite thoughts and themes, what His most weighty and forceful utterances, what the facts and issue of His earthly career. By these we learn to know Him, and the Exalted Christ becomes a very definite and distinct personality to our minds and the authority for a most sublime group of moral and religious teaching, a transcendent conception of the world, and these in their relation to God.

The Johannine group of teaching seems intended to meet a crave deeper still. After men had heard all that could be told them about the life of Jesus, there was sure

[1] Cf. Somerville, *St. Paul's Conception of Christ*, p. 248, and the quotations there from Weizsäcker and Bruce. But Bruce's view as it bears on Paul must be qualified by the considerations mentioned on the previous page and in the concluding part of this chapter.

to come up this inquiry, who, what, in reality was He? His extraordinary mastery over the powers of nature as shown in His miracles, His complete freedom from the taint of sin, His perfect *rapport* with the Divine in all He said and did, what accounted for it all? What accounted for the unparalleled elevation at which He lived, while otherwise, in His station, bearing, appearance, and needs, He was in no whit different from the humblest of His followers? John's writings come as the answer. Epistle and Gospel alike are written to explain the nature of the wondrous Teacher. The selection of the material in the Gospel is determined by the consideration of how it will bear on this theme. It was all written to make clear that Jesus of Nazareth was, in the highest sense, the Son of God. The introduction of it, in which he seeks and finds common ground with philosophic thought, Jewish, Alexandrian, and Platonic, states this in two words: "the Word was God," and "the Word was made flesh." And after that, every paragraph selected for inclusion—and it is well worth observing—culminates in some such deliverance as "this is the Son of God." Take these by way of illustration. There is, the very first, the story of John the Baptist's testimony, i. 19–34. What conclusion does he reach? "I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God." The whole Samaritan episode culminates in a great confession of faith, "We have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world," iv. 42. The feeding of the five thousand leads up to Peter's great confession, "We have believed, and know that Thou art the Holy One of God," vi. 69. The blind man healed (ix. 35–38) is asked, "Dost thou believe upon the Son of God?" and is told, "Thou hast both seen Him, and He it is that talketh with thee." But all this only corroborates the express declaration in xx. 31, "Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples which are not written in this book; but these

are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." The authority of such a Teacher is fully guaranteed, wherever we can find His words. And we understand why so much significance was at once attached to Him as Exalted Lord. It was due to the surpassing impression, which, from the very first, had been made on the minds of His disciples, which had sunk deeper and deeper into the minds of the men who knew Him best, and which became ever more definite the more they pondered and considered, till the truth blazed upon them in all its fulness.

The meaning of the order of appearance may be seen again in the group of Paul's letters. Among the very first are the Epistles to the Thessalonians. What is there the prevailing topic? Eschatology, the perplexities it occasions, or the errors which mistaken views of it beget, and the apostle's efforts to meet these. Next come the Epistles to the Corinthians, a series of deliverances on practical problems, not selected by Paul for exposition and elucidation, but submitted to him for his decision or opinion; practical questions which converts, living in the midst of the seething population of a manufacturing and commercial city with all its seductions and entangling engagements, were very soon compelled to face. Next comes the Epistle to the Romans, a message to a Church of already some years' standing, but a letter in which the apostle seeks to win the confidence of men to whom he was personally a stranger. In it, therefore, he states what he regarded as the fundamental bearings of the Gospel, what the prime significance of the most notable facts of Christian faith. The three following Epistles show the applicability of the Gospel to the wider problems of life, go deeper and deeper into the secrets of the spirituality, reveal the intensity and pervasiveness, of the life that is in Christ. Following these are the Pastoral Epistles, a group mainly ecclesiastical, true to what they

purport to be—fatherly counsels from an experienced bishop of souls to younger men, who are beginning to feel the burden of responsibility, and are anxious for his advice in view of new developments in the Christian communities amid which they work. But is this sequence an accident? Is there not a striking parallel between the progressive phases of truth which they respectively treat, and the natural order of development of Christian inquiry? If the course of history is the life of the individual writ large, is not the sequence just noticed the counterpart of what is constantly found in the spiritual life of the individual? There is, first, that craving for knowledge of the future, the unknown, which you find in children. Then your young man is either demanding a categorical decision, as to whether he may, as a Christian, go to the theatre, dance, play cards, and so on, or else he wants a logical explanation of the Christian faith, in effect either an Epistle to the Corinthians or an Epistle to the Romans. As men grow older they are not so anxious about these things, but they do crave light on the deeper relations of the spiritual life. While towards the end of life they sympathise with the shrewd old Baptist minister,[1] who said that latterly he came to the conclusion that if, when admitting members to the Church, he got a reliable answer to two questions, he generally found men right on all the rest. The questions were, "Do you speak the truth?" and "Do you pay your debts?"—rather like the atmosphere of the Pastoral Epistles (cf. 1 Tim. i. 5, iii., v. 8 *et passim*, vi. 3 ff.; 2 Tim. ii. 14 ff., iii.; Tit. i. 5 ff., ii., iii. 8). Here, then, is a steady advance in the presentation of Christian truth and its applications. It might be hasty to say "development." At least it would be a mistake to say that it shows development in the mind of

[1] Cf. Richard Baxter's remark: "The older I grow, the smaller stress I lay on . . . controversies. . . . The Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments are now to me as my daily meat and drink."

the author. It only shows how, with changing needs, the writer applied Christian truth to meet the needs. It may be that the need quickened the latent truth into consciousness in the writer's mind. It may also be that he saw the far-reaching possibilities and applications of the truth from the first, and only gave expression to them as the need arose. And the firmness and vigour with which the application is made in each case rather favour the latter idea. But, on the other hand, the sequence of the Epistles clearly shows that it was only gradually the Christian community attained to an understanding of the resources of the treasure which they had received in Christ. It came to them as no cut and dry system, but a vital force adjusting itself to the new conditions which it had successively to meet.

The same progressive character is observable, if not in the order of their appearance,[1] at anyrate in the internal structure of the Gospels. There are three distinct lines along which progress of thought is observable. There is (1) first of all, what must be referred to much more in detail later, the gradual development and expansion of the teaching of Jesus Himself, passing in succession from the Kingdom to the Christ, and from the Christ to the Cross, and from the Cross to the Throne. But (2) alongside of that, there is the more slowly growing comprehension of Christ's teaching by His apostles, often waiting for some great significant act, like the dismissing of the crowds eager to make Him king and His chilling reception of them on the following day, or among the inner three an event like the Transfiguration, or, finally, the Resurrection, to precipitate

[1] The order of the Synoptics is an open question, but there is little doubt that Luke is later than Matthew and Mark, and that all three are earlier than John. If so, we have, first, specimens of Christ's sayings and a picture of Himself, then a study of the sequence of His self-revelation in word and act, and, finally, the reflections of mature experience on the fundamental facts, illustratively presented.

and crystallise the vague ideas that had gathered in their minds. And then (3) there is a third line of development clearly implied by one explanatory remark after another, namely, the growing insight, gained by review with the aid of light from long subsequent events, which determined for the evangelists the interpretation which they were to put upon enigmatic, prophetic words, which they had failed to understand at the time at which they were spoken.

These, then, are features of the literary sources, considered as such, from which is derived the material for a knowledge of the teaching, alike of our Lord and of His apostles. And, of course, there is no difficulty in recognising there the teaching of the apostles. On the other hand, the question may fairly be asked, To what extent can they be regarded as reliable sources for the teaching of Christ Himself? Can the Epistles give this at all? In them you have the record of the forces which produced in their authors the most momentous experiences of their truest life,—forces which in effect resolve themselves into the great Personality, Jesus Christ, and what He was and said and did. But is that answer enough to justify us in treating the Epistles as authoritative for the substance of Christ's teaching? Is what we have there virtually what Christ taught by word and deed; and if we understand them, have we reached Christ's teaching? So far, the result we shall reach by our detailed study of these documents will supply the answer to that question.

But even as regards the Gospels, are we at liberty, without more ado, to accept the teaching there ascribed to Christ as really His, and in the sense in which He meant it? And we need to answer this question, because, as has been already said, we have no work from Christ's own hand. We only learn what He said and what He did from the records of attached disciples or of early converts, who themselves first heard them by word of mouth, and treasured them in

their memories. However anxious they were to be faithful, both in the selection of the material and in the form which they have given to the record of the events and the report of the words, the element of the human personality could not be lost. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John have their distinctive characteristics, which have coloured their work. And it is one of the gains of the protest against a mechanical theory of verbal inspiration, that the delicate touches that come from the variety of personality have now been allowed their due recognition and value as an aid to the better appreciation of the many-sidedness of Jesus Christ. These Gospels are not mere reports, nor yet are they autobiographies, or literary expositions of His work, by Christ. They are the work of others, the form in which they cast their confession of faith. And this proviso forbids us setting them up as higher authorities than the Epistles. Both stand on common ground. And it is bearing this in mind that we are entitled to accept them as direct evidence of what Christ actually taught, and to take the words they attribute to Him as essentially His, in most cases His *ipsissima verba*. But the fact that Jesus did not Himself commit His teaching to writing, but left it to the precarious fate—if you will—of the capacity or incapacity of His personal followers to retain it in their memories and reproduce it with more or less accuracy, need not take us by surprise. It is only in keeping with that whole attitude of His, which should long ago have taught us that it is not the letter, even of His words, but the spirit, which is of supreme importance, and that we need not be greatly exercised about precision of terms, when, with Paul, we can say with all the irony of conviction, "I think that I have the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. vii. 40). Of that mind of Christ we are left in no doubt. The evangelists have succeeded each in conveying to us his own impression, and yet together they leave but one impression, as to what Christ taught and

what He regarded as of supreme importance in His message and work.

When we have said this, we have so far recovered the ground from which we may regard the Epistles as sources of Christ's teaching. They record, as I have said, the great impressive facts and truths, embodied and expressed by Christ, which moulded their authors' lives. In that way they are decisive as to what He taught. And thus we get the clue to an answer to a common question, and an answer which carries us further than the question *per se* demands, namely, Why does Paul take so little account in his Epistles of the life and the verbal teaching of Jesus? Why does he emphasise only the death and resurrection of Jesus, and the life of the Exalted Christ? There is just enough of *primâ facie* verisimilitude about the contention implied here as to the absence of direct reference to the incidents of the life and the sayings of Jesus in Paul's writings, to give it the air of plausibility. But one after another has shown very satisfactorily that there is a far larger amount of acquaintance implied than appears on the surface. It is not necessary to do more than refer to the work of Paret, Lumby, Matheson, and Knowling in support of it. But there are other arguments that deserve consideration. (*a*) In view of what has been effected by Ramsay and others in the way of restoring confidence in the Acts of the Apostles, it will not do to ignore what is there stated as to the subject of Paul's preaching. The sermon at Antioch in Pisidia has references, not only to Jesus, but to the forerunner John. The subject of the preaching at Athens is "Jesus and the Resurrection." The themes on which he discoursed in his own house at Rome are "the kingdom of God and those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ." (*b*) Then again, we may proceed by analogy. There is an Epistle by Christ's most prominent disciple, by Peter. What references of a direct kind are there to the

doings and words of Jesus there? Nothing more pronounced than in Paul. And are we to conclude, therefore, that Peter knew nothing of the words or acts of Jesus? "Ah, but," the reply is, "that is just one reason for suspecting the Petrine authorship of the First Epistle." Very good; but in that case you can hardly use the very pointed reference to the Transfiguration in the Second Epistle to discredit it. The presence or absence of references to the life of Christ cannot be made arguments for, or arguments against, genuineness, as suits a theory. And I regard the argument against First Peter as quite overborne by the other evidence in its favour. Peter's reserve, therefore, throws a suggestive light on Paul's. (*c*) But more, there is another set of Epistles by an evangelist, the three from John. What measure of detailed acquaintance with the words and works of Jesus do these display? No more than writings of Paul. And yet John knew enough to furnish a Gospel, ay, to supplement at least three Gospels already existent, with which he was familiar. If these things mean anything, they suggest that Paul was not necessarily so ill informed as to the life of Jesus, or attached so little importance to it; but had he been so inclined or impelled, Paul was just as well furnished with information to write a Gospel as either Mark or Luke. (*d*) There is, too, a curious and striking sidelight thrown on this in Paul's reserve as to many of the facts of his own life. No man ever wrote more of himself into his books, and we are not surprised at constant incidental references to himself in epistolary correspondence. But what are we to make of Paul's extraordinary reserve there as to his conversion? If the Exalted Christ, who then appeared to him, was his supreme concern, why is there no more than a passing reference, in Galatians and Corinthians, of a very indirect kind, to that most striking and unusual event? It was not that he did not care to speak of it in detail. The

pages of the Acts of the Apostles explode such a suggestion. It only shows that the argument from silence is far too weak to apply to Paul, to a preacher, that is, who was not limited to letters for the conveyance of his message to his converts, and who, in his letters, seems only anxious to adduce what is most pressingly applicable to the matter in hand. (*e*) Still further, the early demand, already noticed, for information as to particulars about Jesus, makes it plain that no man could have fulfilled the rôle of Paul if he had not been fully acquainted with the facts of His life. For one thing, what could have induced him for himself to attach any importance to the death and resurrection of an unknown individual? His conversion would then become something not simply miraculous, but utterly magical and unintelligible. For another, what could he have said to induce other people to attach importance to the Exalted Lord of whom he spoke, and who was supposed to have secured His throne by a victory won in death and resurrection, if he could tell them nothing about Him prior to these events? The first question he would be asked to face would be, who was Jesus that I should believe in Him?—the very question of the blind man whose faith Jesus Himself sought to enlist. To answer that question demands familiarity with, and reference to, the events of the life of Christ. And all this seems so obvious that it should not require to be stated.

On the other hand, this life and teaching are not prominent in detail in Paul's Epistles, because there he was anxious to bring the very strongest influence to bear on the minds of men, in order to secure the spiritual results for which he was striving. And he felt that no single incident of the life of Christ, no single utterance of Christ, was half so impressive as the great culminating act of His life, namely, His death on the Cross; no evidence of His dignity and authority half so convincing as the resurrection

and ascension to God's right hand. For him, as for the other apostles, these two facts superseded everything else, because they included all. They were the epitome of His marvellous career and personality. And with these to appeal to, what call was there to go back on subordinate events and utterances, especially in dealing with men who were already familiar with them all? It was not on any single word of Christ that Paul or other apostles were content to take their stand. Their appeal was to the impress of Himself, His over-mastering personality. For them, in reality, Jesus was far more than a teacher. The crisis of His career was more eloquent than any word, unparalleled in sublimity though it be. And they felt that they had not really let the Master speak, until they had placed Him in His supreme act and dignity before the wondering eyes of men.

Thus we see that the question should not be, why does not Paul, but why do none of the writers of the Epistles record in detail the life and words of Jesus? and the answer is as we have seen. The reserve of the Epistles,[1] therefore, in reference to the words and deeds of Christ's earthly life, is virtually a clue to what was the early conception of the constituent factors in Christ's teaching. It was not simply what He said, but it was what He did, to what He submitted, and what He was. And in order to understand Him, it was just as essential to be aware of His death, and to be convinced of the truth as to His Person and position, as it was to know what He actually said. It is therefore

[1] An interesting parallel to this comparative silence of the Epistles is afforded by the sermons of evangelicals of the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century (the leaders of the Methodist Revival, the Marrow Men, etc.). These men were as familiar with the Gospels as with the Epistles; but their references to the incidents of Christ's life and to His words are very rare, compared with their references to the Cross. And the reason is, not that they attached little significance to them, but they could assume these as familiar to their hearers; and it is their application of Christianity in its intensest expression, so as to secure the most thorough and lasting spiritual results, that has concentrated their utterances upon the Cross.

impossible to exaggerate the importance of His doings and sufferings for a proper understanding of His words. You cannot catch His meaning without this. Indeed, all through Christ's teaching, the personal factor is supreme. His words are almost all incidental. There is scarcely anything that can be called a set discourse throughout it. The words are only understood in their setting. They lose immensely when isolated. Nothing will convince anyone of the truth of this like an experiment. A very beautiful little book has been compiled by Mr. M'Kail, called, *The Sayings of the Lord Jesus Christ.* It consists of a sort of classified collection of Christ's words; and the thing could scarcely be better done. But let anyone peruse it, and unconsciously he will constantly be reading the words into the familiar situation, in order to find the setting in which to understand them. The words, beautiful, arresting, profound as they are, hang deprived of half their meaning, till they are associated with the life. It follows, that Jesus the Teacher is no mere master of words, but His life teaches as emphatically and plainly as His words, and we must bear that in mind in comparing His apostles' teaching with His own.

CHAPTER II

The School of Christ

School selected by Christ—All practically first-hand Witnesses—Of one Race, as also their Master—Evidence of this in Teaching—(1) Forces at Work in Jewry—How far exposed to them—No Indebtedness for Substance of Gospel—Object Lesson by Contrast with Philo and John the Baptist—(2) Popular Character of Christ's Mission—(3) Influence of Old Testament—Importance of Personal Factor in understanding Religious Teaching.

Two Groups—(1) James, Peter, John, Matthew—(2) Mark, Luke, and Paul—Paul prior to Conversion—Conversion—What it meant for his Work—What it meant for Himself—His Manner of Life as a Christian Missionary—The Variety of Type of Christian Teacher.

Christ's view of His Apostles—Some selected, and Accessions anticipated—Christ trained them, spiritually as well as mentally—He commissioned them, and promised the Spirit to aid their Work—How the Apostles regarded themselves—"We are Witnesses"—Independent of others—Absolutely dependent on Christ as Master, who teaches by Word, Spirit, and Life.

THE Books that contain the teaching of the Master and of His School are the work of the members of the School and the authoritative sources for information as to what that School taught. It is from them, also, that an account is obtained of the lives of the Master and His disciples. And it will be all the easier to understand the inter-relations of that teaching, if regard is had to the men themselves and their relations to one another, to the contemporary influences to which they were exposed, to their training and qualifications, and to what the Master thought of them and their teaching, and they of His and of their own.

These teachers and writers all came more or less directly under the personal teaching of Christ. Those of

them who were not His own immediate disciples, in the days of His flesh, were the fruits of the work of those who actually sat at His feet. In the one class, there are Matthew, John, Peter, and James, three of the chosen twelve, and the fourth, Christ's own brother. In the other, there are Mark, Luke, Paul, and the writer of the Hebrews. Of the latter, Mark was the youthful acquaintance of the foremost men in the ranks of the Early Church, and probably, as a youth, he knew Jesus. Paul was the subject of a special intervention of the Risen Christ to secure his services. Luke and, probably, the writer of the Hebrews were reached through Paul. They are all thus practically first-hand witnesses of what the Early Church believed as to the teaching of Jesus, being themselves either the direct vehicles of it or the very first to record it.

All of them, with the exception of Luke, belong to one race, the race of the Jews. They were, therefore, all brought up under very much the same set of influences and traditions. Paul is no exception. Born in Tarsus, he doubtless came more into contact with Greek life than did the others. But to say nothing here of his later training at the feet of Gamaliel at Jerusalem, or of the strong protestations, which he again and again makes, of the pureness of his Hebrew descent and upbringing, the conditions of Jewish communities in most of the Greek cities—Tarsus among the number—gave them a certain independence and isolation, in which it was possible to retain, almost intact, the national and religious atmosphere of Judaism. In these cities, and in these times, his rights did for the Jew what his wrongs did in later days. They kept him distinct. Wherever he was born, he was brought up a Jew.[1] And that is Paul's case. And not only so,

[1] Cf. what is said by M. Leroy Beaulieu, *Israel among the Nations*, p. 124: "The Jew has been made by the Synagogue. If the Ghetto (or its equivalent) is the house in which he has been reared, the Bible is his mother, and the Talmud his father."

but their Master also experienced these influences. He, too, was a Jew. He spent His whole life among the Jewish people. Brought up in a village home, mingling with the peasantry, He was from the first subjected to the influence of a nation's heritage of life and thought in the pure, unsophisticated form which it assumes among the humbler ranks of society.

This group of the world's teachers, then, started with a common view of life and the world. They had learned the same lessons from their parents and teachers. They had heard the same views of truth and duty set forth by their religious guides. They had joined in the same common worship of the one God. Their mental and spiritual heritage was one and the same. It will be important to consider what this was. But, remembering that it was common to them all, we must do so with the proviso, that, if variety should afterwards appear in their individual presentation of the new truth, we must look for the explanation rather in individual temperament and personal experience, than in old environment in which they originally grew up. If remnants, due to that environment, are carried over by any of them into the new faith, which appear incongruous or inharmonious there, it will not be enough to point in explanation to the conditions of youthful upbringing, for that belongs to all alike. It must be shown that, in the particular case, there was something that rendered it peculiarly difficult to drop the old in adopting the new.

What, then, were the predominant influences at work throughout the Jewish world at the time when Christianity arose, and to what extent are they in evidence in Christ's teaching and in that of His disciples?

The predominant influences were of two kinds, internal or native, and external or foreign. In each of these there are groups that show a certain connection of mutual affinity or antagonism. So also, groups of the native

influences necessarily involve common relations with kindred influences from without. A certain common element can be recognised between those internal forces which are included in the names Pharisaism, Sadduceeism, Rabbinical Tradition, the Apocryphal Books of Wisdom, and those external influences which are suggested by the terms Herodians, Greek Culture, Alexandrian Philosophy, and the Septuagint; and, on the other hand, a like inter-relation exists between Essenism, Messianic expectation, Apocalyptic Literature, Zealotism, and the Publicans, the Soldiery, and other institutions suggestive of the Roman Supremacy. These influences were all at work, acting and reacting on each other, and it is just as easy to underrate as to overrate their effect on Christ and His followers. We tell ourselves, for instance, that Jesus and His disciples, were unlettered and ignorant men; that they belonged to quite humble ranks in society, where they were largely beyond the reach of philosophic and intellectual culture, and were unaffected by political movements except in a quite subordinate way. We tell ourselves that they lived in an out-of-the-way part of the country, where they were left untouched by the great world-currents, far from the Capital, the centre of the nation's life, and that in a nation impervious at any time to outside influences. We picture Galilee and its Sea as a kind of distant Highland strath and loch, or a remote Swiss valley and lake, where a few hamlets and homesteads lie, cut off from the rest of the world, wrapt up in themselves, retaining their native simplicity and ingenuousness, and almost oblivious to what is going on in the busy world outside. But that is all imagination. Galilee was called Galilee of the Gentiles, and it was the part of Palestine which was always most accessible to prevalent outside movements of life and thought. The Plain of Esdraelon, overlooking which lay Nazareth, was the world's highway between Egypt and Syria. Capernaum

was a busy trade emporium between these lands. And in place of the peasantry and humbler classes there being more out of reach than others, they were probably those upon whom the various influences, of which we have spoken, were most likely to play. And we cannot be too thankful for the magnificent work which has been done in all these fields, to show their affinity with the teaching of Christ and His apostles. And yet the drift seems to be towards a discounting of the actual effects. Not but what the existence of such influences is admitted, but the evidence of their exercise upon Christian teaching in its original phases is regarded as after all very, very small.[1] Efforts to associate Jesus very closely with the Essenes, for instance, must be regarded as ingenious failures. And the same must be said of all the attempts to explain His Messiahship as a mere product of His reflection on Apocalyptic Books. Just as little can be made of the influence of Greek religion or philosophy. In Christianity you are dealing with a new creation, the subtle influence which has gradually invaded and transcended the whole range of classic life and thought. Browning marks the transition as it reached Art, and what he says of Art is true of the whole case—

> "I conclude that the early painters,
> To cries of 'Greek Art and what more wish you?'
> Replied, 'To become now self-acquainters,
> And paint man, man, whatever the issue!
>
> Make new hopes shine through the flesh they fray,
> New fears aggrandise the rags and tatters:
> To bring the Invisible full into play!
> Let the Visible go to the dogs—what matters?'"[2]

So it had been in life, so in thought; so first of all in religion. As Beyschlag puts it: "Even though a contact of Jesus with the Hellenic world had not already been

[1] Cf. in support of this Harnack's note, *History of Dogma*, i. 48.
[2] *Old Pictures in Florence.*

excluded by the outer facts of His life—how could He have kindled His inner light and life at this hearth? The religion of classical antiquity, even in its noblest manifestations and its then foremost living mysteries, was the worship of deified nature, and therefore the direct opposite of the religion of Jesus. And the philosophy of antiquity, even where its highest presentiments of truth approach to the gospel, was just philosophy and not revelation,—a wavering, doubting question, addressed to Heaven, not a certified answer from Heaven, such as Jesus gives."[1] The numbers are becoming fewer and fewer of whom Huxley could say that "they think it obvious that Christianity inherited a good deal from Paganism and from Judaism, and that if the Stoics and the Jews revoked their bequests, the moral property of Christianity would realise very little."[2] The evidence of daily accumulating facts is all against him.

There is, moreover, a providential provision for comparing in each case the creation of these influences in a Jew of these times with Christ and His apostles. There is Philo, and there is John the Baptist.

In Philo, the learned Jew of Alexandria, there is a perfect example of what the combination of reverence for the old Jewish law and tradition, combined with an eager interest in Greek philosophic speculation, would produce. And, while much has been made of the influence which he is supposed to have exercised on Paul and John, none can deny that the differences are simply out of all proportion to the points of resemblance, so much so, indeed, that these resemblances must be regarded as largely accidental and, so to say, inevitable; while, if you carry the comparison a step further back, and place Philo and Jesus side by side, there is simply no resemblance at all.

John the Baptist is commonly thought of as the fore-

[1] *New Testament Theology*, i. 34. [2] *Collected Essays*, ix. 145.

runner of Christ. Jesus regarded him in that light Himself. And this has led to a somewhat hasty reading back into the thought and teaching of John the Baptist of a large amount of the substance of Christ's teaching. That is to mistake John's place. That is to mistake the attitude of Jesus toward John. While our Saviour did regard him as His own herald, He also emphasised the differences between them. John was an ascetic: Jesus was not. And the work he did was, while preparatory, often of the very opposite spirit from that of Christ. The difference between them is nowhere more pronounced than in their conceptions of the office and work of the Messiah. John's Messiah is, above all, the drastic iconoclast and reformer of the Book of Malachi. Christ's own conception is got in His striking reply to John's perplexity at this very discrepancy between the Messiah he expected and the Messiah he found in Jesus of Nazareth, or again in that wonderful word in Isaiah which Matthew applies to Jesus, "He shall not strive nor cry, nor lift up His voice in the street. The bruised reed will He not break, nor quench the smoking flax." The fan John placed in His hand to purge the threshing-floor was first to play a very different part—fan feeble flames into life and vigour—before it executed the office John expected. This contrast, however, just brings out the difference between Jesus and a child of the Esseno-Apocalyptic influence, looking for a Messiah who should lead on a purified Israel to the expulsion of the Romans, and to a world-empire which should be the Kingdom of God. This, John's hope, was the purest form of the prevalent Messianic hope of the time; but, pure though it was, it had in large part to be dislodged from the minds of men by Jesus, in order to make way for the Christ and Kingdom He came to reveal and institute. In view of these very marked contrasts between the real products of the contemporary forces of the early days of Christianity and Christ Himself and His apostles, we cannot

regard the latter as influenced to any material extent by these forces.

What is of importance in these influences is the part they played in moulding the life and thought of those to whom Christ's teaching was first addressed. These were forces at work, and, while they did not contribute to the essence of the gospel message, they did determine the form in which it was stated, and variety in its statement is often due to accommodation to the current thoughts of contemporaries. They evoked efforts to put the new truth in terms which would be understood, and which would place it, so to say, on the common ground from which it could proceed to assert its distinctive character. Christian teaching recognised a world-wide preparation for itself. The Epistle to the Hebrews begins with an express reference to the preparation in the Jewish religion; and the attitude of Christ Himself and His disciple Paul towards the law expresses the same fact. Paul could find in the altar "To the Unknown God" the starting-point for preaching the revelation of Him after whom he saw that the old Hellenic worship was feeling, if haply it might find Him. But, for the rest, where Jesus and His gospel met Greek and Jewish thought, He influenced them, and not they Him.

But account must be taken of another factor to which attention was called by Locke long ago,[1] and which recent investigations in one particular field, and the application of the results reached there, suggest as equally applicable all round. Professor Ramsay,[2] for instance, shows the part played by the current religious phraseology of contemporary Paganism in supplying words for the expression of Christian truth. But these words were not, so to say, technical terms. They were, in the main, the words in common everyday use applied to these subjects. Blass, again, in the introduction to his *Grammar*, shows that the New Testament

[1] *Notes on the Epistles*, Introd. xvii. [2] *Expository Times*, x. 9, 54, etc.

language is simply the colloquial language of the day, with rules and phrases of its own, which are often quite independent of the restrictions of classic Greek. And he supports his case by pointing out indications of a feeling for purer style in parts of the New Testament, which are presumably of a formal nature (Acts i. 1–5, xv. 23–29), or which, like Paul's speech before Agrippa (Acts xxvi.) in contrast with his speech from the stairs (xxii.), were addressed to more cultured ears. And so in reference to all these movements and influences of which we have been speaking, it is not enough to study the affinity of the erudite teachings of their literary exponents and leaders with the teachings of Christ and His disciples. For, though we may speak of a Christian school, it was no group of students, select from the common herd, learning from Christ's lips a set of esoteric doctrines. It was simply the chosen band around the Leader in a great popular movement. From the first it addressed itself to the common people. It was not supremely concerned about the wise and prudent. It was anxious to reach even babes in intelligence. And if it encountered various movements of the day, it was not in their pure and unadulterated form, but in those often grotesque forms in which they had filtered down into the thoughts of the man in the street. In our own time, the secularism, socialism, agnosticism, met with in actual life, are very different from these matters as presented in learned volumes, setting forth their nature and aim. It may be, it is, necessary to understand the leaders, in order to explain their camp-followers. But in a popular movement to meet them, notice must chiefly be taken of the popular form of presentation, and it is by that popular form these movements chiefly influence the thought and expression of their assailants. So Christianity, in its Founder and His earliest coadjutors, was a popular movement, addressed to men of the simplest

characters, and accordingly it avoided what was recondite and abstruse, and dealt with problems as they could be treated in the concrete and in the current terms of everyday life.

There is one influence, however, from the past and from contemporary feeling, whose effect is unmistakable upon the whole early Christian school, from the Master Himself to the humblest learner. That influence is the Old Testament.[1] The Old Testament was regarded by them with the profoundest veneration. And this was no mere tribute to popular feeling. It had in it something of a challenge and an appeal. The attitude of the apostles and of Christ Himself is not simply that of innovators. They were reformers as well. They did their work among a people who possessed a glorious inheritance, of which they were proud, but which they had allowed to be buried under a mass of inanity and triviality. And what Luther and the Reformers of his time had to do, in their day, for the Bible as a whole, and in a supreme sense for the New Testament,—namely, rescue it from the gorgeous mausoleum of the extravagances of Roman Catholic tradition and ritual, in which it was buried and forgotten,—was the counterpart of what the Saviour Himself had to do for the first instalment of the Old Book. As Christ bids men notice again and again, He claims to be the recoverer and vindicator of the old truths which had been lost sight of. His evangelists are most anxious to prove that their Master is in line with the prophecies and forecasts of the Old Testament revelation. And even when they insist that at points its teaching is superseded or annulled, they always do so in the spirit of profound respect. Their language, their thought, their views of God and Man and the World are all based on what they have learned from the Old Testament. When

[1] See Bousset's Monograph, *Jesu Predigt in ihrem Gegensatz zum Judenthum*, throughout. His closing sentence summarises the position: "The gospel develops the hidden trend of the Old Testament, but protests against the dominating tendency of the Judaism of its day."

Jesus was challenged for allowing disciples to eat with unwashed hands (Mark vii. 1–16),—an infringement, it was said, of the tradition of the elders, *i.e.* the Rabbinical tradition,—with quick severity came His retort, "Full well ye reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said . . . But ye say . . . making the word of God of none effect by your tradition." Matthew, in the very first chapter of his Gospel, relating the birth of Christ, sums up the events with the words, "Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord through the prophet"; and like phrases are constantly recurring. Similar in spirit is the note in John's Gospel, in reference to the death of Christ, "These things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of Him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on Him whom they pierced" (John xix. 36, 37). The whole tenor of the speeches in the Acts is in the same line. The anxiety of the speakers is to find proof from the Scriptures that Jesus is the very Christ. The Bereans are regarded as men of a nobler spirit, because they make the word of God the standard, and try to verify the teaching of the apostles by it. The Apocalypse throbs with Old Testament words and spirit from beginning to end. The Epistle to the Hebrews is built upon it. And with Paul it is the court of constant appeal in verification of what he says. But no amount of reference can adequately reproduce the extent of the influence of the Old Testament on the teaching of the New. There is not a suggestion of breaking away from it. It is a sacred inheritance, to be jealously preserved, and the new religion that has sprung out of it is indeed but the realisation of its truest aim, its anticipated fulfilment and crown.

After this review of the predominant tendencies of the day, and of their influence upon the School of Christ, it

will now be desirable to have regard to the men themselves, their individual natures and idiosyncrasies. To understand them, will throw light on the form which the teaching took in their hands. And this is especially important in the case of a subject like Christianity. It is a religion, an affair of the very life of man, not a mere intellectual movement, in which a man may theorise without any very marked connection existing between his theorisings and his practice. A man's view of Christ and of the truth He taught is very largely determined by the spiritual experience through which he is drawn to Christ, enters into fellowship with Him, and grows in the knowledge of Him. We shall have therefore a valuable aid to the understanding of the teaching of the apostles, when, from other sources or from their own testimony, we have a clue to the kind of men they were, to the way in which they were led to identify themselves with Christ's cause, and to the part which they played in its spread and extension.

Of the most prominent writers of the New Testament, it is significant that almost every one of them came into touch with Christ on His own personal invitation. John, Peter, and Matthew received their call from the Lord while He sojourned on earth. We have Paul's authority for saying that James was called by the Risen Lord. And Paul himself was "apprehended," as he says, by the Ascended Christ.

Of these, James was by nature most closely connected with Jesus. He was a younger son of Mary, one of Christ's own brothers. Up till the time of the Resurrection, however, he did not believe in the claims of his elder brother. Doubtless, his memory was full of Christ's early days, and of the rare nobility and docility of that devoted son who learnt His trade at His father's side. He remembered when He relinquished this, and took up the rôle of a preacher, striving to reawaken the spiritual life of His

people. He remembered — his Epistle shows it — the strange fascination of that great sermon on the hillside, when Jesus seemed to make the old law live again with all the vividness and depth of its first announcement at Sinai. But then perplexity crept over the home. They heard of miracles, and men whispering the question, "was Jesus the Messiah?" It was like blasphemy. They must stop Him. He was going mad. Not but what, if character could make a man Messiah, He was fit for it; if devoutness and spirituality of mind were enough, James had never known one like Jesus. But Messiah! Impossible. And when men crucified Him, though it was near breaking his heart, it only proved the terrible infatuation of which his poor deluded brother had been the victim. But that was not the whole story. Three days after, his crucified and buried brother met him, alive and strong; and that meeting left James as convinced that his brother really was the Messiah as he had previously been convinced that He was not, and he became a most devoted adherent of His cause. The very reverence for the old law, which had made him long hesitate to believe, now but made him cherish with the deeper affection the words of his brother which had all along seemed such an illumination of it. These words moulded all his afterthought and utterance, and no one of the Epistles is so replete with reminiscences of words of Christ as the Epistle of James. He immediately joined the young community at Jerusalem, and was quickly recognised as its head. As yet, its members were in little distinguished from their fellow-countrymen, except by their acceptance and proclamation of Jesus of Nazareth, their risen Lord, as Israel's promised Messiah, and by their observance, in accordance with His command, of the rites of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They continued to observe the ordinances of the Jewish law, just as Jesus Himself had done, participating in the worship of the

synagogue and of the temple, and retaining their character as true Jews. And such was the habit of James throughout his life. Neither he nor they perceived at once the far-reaching effects of their new faith. But, while some of them were eager to insist on the permanent necessity of this for all who accepted the faith in Christ, James was content to practise it himself, or even to counsel it in other Jews while in a predominatingly Jewish community like Jerusalem (Acts xxi. 18 ff.); but he was willing to recognise the new light which broke in, first through the experience of Peter, then from the developments at Antioch, and most conclusively from the wonderful spread of the gospel in the Gentile world as a result of the preaching of Paul. The primitive simplicity and routine of his own life were never changed. By that he retained his authority over even the extreme anti-Pauline party in Jerusalem, but he never succumbed to their narrow-minded opinions. He was largely instrumental in maintaining the unity of the Church, when the ferment of the new wine was threatening to burst the old bottles. And we recognise the enormous value of a man of his character and so closely connected with the Saviour, in such a prominent position amid the delicate transitions and expansions of these early days.

Another prominent teacher is Peter. When he was met by Jesus, he was a married man with a wife and family. He was a fisherman, and with his cautious brother, Andrew, worked in partnership with the sons of Zebedee. He was of a warm-hearted, impulsive nature, hail-fellow-well-met with everybody. In the high priest's house men spoke to him, not to John. He had every confidence in his own strength and opinions, and never hesitated to take word in hand for any company he was in. His very sins were the defects of his virtues. He was not very profound, but he was a broad-minded, shrewd, practical man, and he was first brought into touch with Jesus by his brother Andrew,

on the declaration, "We have found the Messias." On their meeting he was at once recognised by Jesus as a peculiarly capable, reliable man. "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas." But it took a curious series of experiences to make the Rock of him. There was that experience in the fishing-boat when, at the sudden sense of the presence in Christ of a mysterious superhuman power, conscience began to work. There was the confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," and the almost immediately needed rebuke, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto Me." There was the fatal boast of unfaltering fidelity, the shameful collapse, the bitter repentance, and the tenderly searching restoral. There was the scene in the Sanhedrin with John, the vision at Joppa and the meeting with Cornelius, the trimming at Antioch and the encounter with Paul. These were all factors in the making of Peter. But if his experience of Christ were put in a word, it would be this, that Jesus made a man of him, saved him by the charm of His personal character, the courage of His awful death, the wonder of His resurrection, and its complete reversal of the staggering effects of the Crucifixion. Thus he was gradually led to the conviction that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. To him was committed the Apostleship of the Circumcision. And here we must differentiate as between Peter and James. James seems never to have left Jerusalem. But Peter, from the first, was engaged in spreading the news of Jesus, the Messiah, among his scattered fellow-countrymen. Doubtless, by the time of the First Epistle, Gentiles were at least as numerous as Jews in many of the communities addressed in it, and the Jewish colouring which is found in James has largely disappeared. The old question, as to the position of Gentiles in the Christian Church, was a thing settled, and we can

scarcely trace signs of its existence in his writings. Even from the first, his chief theme is the reiteration of the sin of the Crucifixion of the Messiah, and His glorious vindication by the Resurrection. And the keynote to all his thoughts is that tremendous revulsion of feeling, when, from blank despair, he was recalled to jubilant, triumphant hope. Impressionable[1] as he was, genial, anxious to conciliate, even compromising himself for the love of peace, more anxious for brotherly love than logical consistency; designing men were sometimes guilty of practising on his good nature to serve their own ends. But he only needed the strong intervention of a champion of righteousness to rally him from any lapse. He was not a man to carry resentment, and even a hasty glance at his Epistle will convince even the most superficial reader of the intimacy that must have existed between him and Paul, the writer of the Ephesians. His was valuable work, therefore, in bridging the gulf between Jewish and Gentile Christianity, when the conditions of life made the merely stationary policy of James no longer possible.

The probability is that in John the apostle, another relative of Jesus is to be found among the disciples.[2] He was evidently considerably younger than Jesus. In personal character he was a man of pronounced individuality. Sometimes amid a group of workmen, all good enough men, but perfectly commonplace, is found a marked exception, a young man with refined features, a dreamy absorbed expression, a character that will brook no trifling with morals or religion, and a manner which is a strange mixture of reserve and self-assertion. He is not exactly a favourite. He is regarded as haughty, is given to petulant

[1] Cf. Salmon, *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 545.

[2] A comparison of John xix. 25 with Matt. xxvii. 56 and Mark xv. 40 is almost decisive as to the identity of Salome, the mother of Zebedee's children, and the sister of our Lord's mother. Thus Salome would be the aunt of Jesus, and her son His cousin.

outbursts, and indeed does not quite understand himself. Yet he is generally respected, and any judge of character would like to make his acquaintance. That is John. And when he was introduced to Jesus by the Baptist, the man who had first appealed to the deeper side of his nature, with the hint that Jesus was God's provision for the sin-malady of the race, and when Jesus invited him to follow Him, he at once responded. Here he felt was one who would thoroughly understand him, who would see the depths of genuine passion and affection, earnestness and capacity for service and sacrifice, that lay hid in his pent-up nature, and would appreciate it. And he at once devoted himself to Jesus with all the ardour of his chivalrous heart, and in John Jesus found the nearest approach among men to a bosom friend and confidant. It still needed days and months of discipline to transform the character. The family failing of ill-judged intolerance, vindictiveness, and ambition, those lowering clouds with the menacing flashes that made Jesus familiarly call his brother and him the Boanerges, required firm repression and correction, in order to prevent them spreading misconceptions of the nature of His kingdom, and to allay the jealousies which they provoked among its first disciples. But under the purifying power of the life and love of God, which streamed into him from Christ, he became a new man, acquired a directness of vision and a quickness of perception of things unseen, which are of the very essence of faith. He became capable of the most sympathetic presentation of the very heart of Christ, of the grandest forecast of the triumphant progress of Christ's cause to victory, of the profoundest insight into the nature of the Godhead and the place of Christ there, and of the calmest and most forceful assertion of the pure essentials of the Christian faith and life. We have only glimpses of his career subsequent to the resurrection of Christ—a stand

before the Sanhedrin, a meeting with Paul in Jerusalem, exile in Patmos, extreme old age in Ephesus. But it is the same man to the end, the apostle of love; but love which is no mere amiable sentimentality, but a fire of devotion, an all-consuming flame that is seen as truly in the intensity of its hatred of all that opposes, as in its enthusiasm for, and absorption in, the object of its devotion and regard. And it is as himself, in his own experience, an outstanding specimen and product of the power of the purest love, the love of God revealed in Christ and discovered there by faith, that John is specially equipped for his work as New Testament teacher. We know nothing of the circumstances under which the writings from his pen appeared, except what can be gathered from their own contents. But these bear striking evidence of a spirit in constant communion with Christ, trying to bring every movement which he encountered, after mature deliberation, into subjection to Christ, and accepting or rejecting everything, according as it proved capable of this or not. Nothing can be truer to the spirit, character, and development of John than the striking picture of him given by Browning in "A Death in the Desert," the old man anxious out of his lengthened experience to meet the new problems steadily emerging to claim the attention and solution of the Christian revelation, and recalling from the still unexhausted treasures of his memory life-giving words of Christ for the service of his younger brethren and of the ages yet to come. With John we have got far away from Galilee and Jerusalem and the discussions about Jew and Gentile of the days of James, but not one handbreadth away from Jesus, nay, but nearer, closer to Him still.

Of Matthew the Publican we know little[1] but the twice-

[1] Unless, as perhaps we should, we adopt the view implied in these words of Weizsäcker, "Nathanael, whose name is a synonym for Matthew" (*Apostolic Age*, ii. 170), when we would identify him with the "Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile" (John i. 45, 51).

told story of his call, and the joyous feast he held in honour of it, when Jesus first met on friendly, social terms the outcasts of His race and time. A quiet, thoughtful clerk in the Capernaum Custom House, a Jew by race, but shut out by his occupation from all friendly intercourse with his people, and yet a man deeply versed in their sacred books, and given to meditation on their Messianic hopes, he was probably greatly stirred by the exciting events of the sojourn and ministry of Jesus in Capernaum. He was strongly attracted toward Him, and only the fear of rejection, on account of his cursed occupation, hindered him from offering his adhesion. Imagine his surprise, when one day Jesus, in passing his toll-booth, fixed His penetrating gaze upon him, seemed to read his very soul, and then, short and crisp, persuasively and authoritatively, said, "Follow Me." It perfectly electrified the young man, and from that day he was His attached follower; and to his retentive memory and ready pen, the product of his clerking, we owe the fullest record of the sayings of Jesus.

These four apostolic writers all came directly under the influence and instruction of Christ during His life on earth. The other group was chiefly influenced by Christ after His resurrection. I shall do little more than mention the qualifications of Mark and Luke for their work, while, of the writer to the Hebrews, all is conjecture.

Mark was brought up in a Christian atmosphere, his mother's house being a favourite rendezvous of the leading Christians in Jerusalem. Allured by its glamour, his early ambition was to share in the romance of the pioneer Gentile mission. This superficial interest issued in faint-hearted desertion. But judicious handling by his kindly cousin Barnabas confirmed a radical, well-attested change in his life, and his graphic Gospel is the fruit of his familiarity with Peter, and what he heard from that apostle of the Saviour he had learned to love.

Luke was the "beloved physician" of that name and, as we may judge from the "we" sections of the Acts, was the personal friend and companion of Paul, and Paul's influence has told on the character of his Gospel. But Luke was himself a Greek, probably a Macedonian, at home in Greek habits and customs, rather vague as to the niceties of Roman administration, unfamiliar with Palestine, but eager to learn all he could from the most reliable sources about the marvellous personality, so truly human, whom he worshipped as the Son of God, and quick to avail himself of the opportunity for this afforded by his visit to that land along with Paul, and his sojourn there during the time of Paul's imprisonment at Cæsarea. He had a fine feeling for the significant events of history, and disregard for mere details, no matter how interesting. He had rare skill in reproducing in his history the spirit of the sources from which he was selecting. Both in his Gospel and in his Acts of the Apostles he is animated by the desire to show the comprehensiveness of the religion of Jesus, its true catholicity, its claim to be recognised as the universal religion, and the way in which it reached out, was welcomed, and embraced, throughout the civilised world.

Almost in a class by himself stands Paul. It is impossible, within our limits, to do justice to the many-sidedness of his nature, or to show how large a contribution to his apprehension and presentation of the gospel of Christ came from that very unique nature with which God had furnished him. In a sense, and to an extent, which I doubt if even Paul himself fully realised, though he was mightily impressed by it and repeatedly referred to it, he was truly separated by God from his mother's womb for his special work. And it is necessary to note the facts and features in general outline.

Paul was born of Jewish parents. Though, like every

Jewish boy, he learned a handicraft, in his case that of tent-making, and was thankful to possess it for the earning of his livelihood in after days, yet there are reasons, among others, his possession, by right of birth, of the Roman franchise, his being sent to Jerusalem for the completion of his education, and in after-life his ability to bear the expense of an appeal to the Supreme Courts at Rome, for thinking that his parents were in comfortable, if not affluent, circumstances. His birthplace was Tarsus in Cilicia, a centre of brilliant intellectual and mercantile activity, a rival of Athens and Alexandria. There he spent his boyhood. But we have no means of judging of the influence which these Greek surroundings exercised upon his imagination then, whether of attraction or repulsion, for he returned to it later after his conversion, and the loathing which he felt for the excesses of paganism, and the antagonism to mere philosophising, which find expression in his Epistles, may be later growths and not early impressions. Yet the fact that the boy showed an anxiety to proceed to Jerusalem and devote himself to the absorbing study of the Hebrew faith and the Jewish law, seems to suggest that at that early time the Greek influence was small. At most, it will explain his fluency, if not perspicuous accuracy and nicety, in the use of the Greek language. That evident acquaintance with Greek sports and contests too, which he so often turned to good account in writing to Greeks, was doubtless due to boyish interest, as it could scarcely with him be a growth of maturer years. He was a freeborn Roman, a privilege of which he was justly proud, of which he well knew the value, and which prepared the way, through early touch with the cosmopolitan character of the Roman Empire, for the universal aspect of Christianity, which he was the first of Christ's followers fully to recognise, affirm, and act upon. It was at Jerusalem Paul came under the most strongly formative

influences of his early life. He was brought up, as he says, at the feet of Gamaliel the Pharisee, the most distinguished Rabbi of the day (the first indeed to be called Rabban—our Rabbi), the head of the school of Hillel. What the effect of that training upon him was, he tells in so many words, "After the straitest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee . . . as touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." And there is unmistakable evidence of his familiarity with Rabbinical modes of thought and argument in very many of his utterances. He was no hypocrite among the Pharisees. If none else was sincere, at least Saul of Tarsus was, in his anxiety to follow what he believed from them to be the way of righteousness. Here you reach the very deepest sentiment of his heart, a consuming anxiety to be right with God, and a passionate attachment to the Jewish faith, because he believed implicitly that here was to be found the secret of its attainment (Rom. x. 2).

In Jerusalem, however, he came also within the range of a disconcerting influence. Jesus of Nazareth was then producing a profound stir in the country. Whether Paul saw Him in the flesh or not, it is simply impossible to believe that a young student of the type of Paul should have remained quite indifferent to a movement, about which the leaders of his party were deeply moved and anxiously observant. There is something alluring about the idea that he was one of the young men who came to Christ with the questions as to eternal life. At any rate, it was quite in line with Paul's inmost thought. But the first certain appearance of him is as an inveterate opponent of the young Christian cause. A man that could do nothing by halves, he was not long a mere consenting party; he became a determined leader in the crusade against the disciples of Jesus. What maddened him was the bold, aggressive attitude of Stephen. Stephen struck the note

of the supersession of Judaism by Christianity. Previous to that, the apostles had been content to insist that Jesus the Crucified was the Risen Messiah. But against Stephen the charge, used before against Christ Himself, was revived, of a design to destroy the temple. And his famous speech was not a repudiation of this, but a masterly exposure of the resistance, by the leaders of the Jewish people, of every legitimate development of their faith. This was too much for the young bigot Saul. He broke with the tolerant attitude of his teacher, Gamaliel, and declared war on the pestilent heresy. In this spirit he pushed the campaign beyond the limits of Palestine, and set out for Damascus. But on the way the crisis of his life occurred, and the appearance to him in person of the Risen Christ changed his whole career. We are familiar with the story from three separate accounts (two of them from his own lips) in the Acts of the Apostles, and from a few incidental references in his Epistles. In view of the credit which we are prepared to accord to Luke's writings, these are to be regarded as of equal value for understanding that event. And one thing that is perfectly certain is the objective reality, to Paul's mind and to the mind of the Early Church, of what took place there. Every suspicion cast on this has been raised in order to use the results to discredit the objective reality of the appearances to the other disciples, which Paul associates as the same in kind with his own experience (1 Cor. xv. 4–8). But it is enough to refer to Lightfoot and Lipsius in their respective commentaries on Gal. i. 16, to show that the phrase used there, of which so much is made (*ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί*), does not necessarily nor naturally suggest "in the chambers of my mind," as indicating the sphere of revelation, but rather "in my case," "in reference to me, so as to produce a very remarkable effect on me, and through, or by means of, me to reach and affect other people," or

simpler still, as Lipsius says, "an nicht in." Blass[1] indeed takes it as simply equivalent to a dative, "to me," and says "in me, *i.e.* in my spirit, would be an unnatural phrase." By that appearance of the Risen Christ Paul, in the first instance, was utterly amazed. He did not know whether it was the appearance of friend or foe, to encourage him in his persecution or to stay his hand, and he asked, "Who art Thou, Lord?" "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." It was the confirmation of the truth of the familiar assertion of the Christians, that Jesus had risen from the dead. It proved the truth of all Stephen had urged of the deluded bigotry of Christ's opponents; and of these he was one of the worst. It was a staggering fact, but he had none to advise with save the arresting Christ Himself, and he humbly surrendered, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

That was his conversion, but what his conversion meant it took time for him to realise. I am not satisfied that we can say with Weizsäcker,[2] that from Paul's own retrospect we learn, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that at his conversion he was at once certain of his destination to be the Apostle of the Gentiles. What Paul says in Gal. i. 12–18 rather suggests that during that solitary sojourn in Arabia he first realised that Jesus, the Risen Messiah, had work for him to do in spreading the Good News. But if we compare the condensed account in Acts xxvi. with the more detailed record in Acts xxii., we are forced to it, that by all the motives of patriotic love and personal preference—and there never was a more patriotic soul than Paul—the supreme ambition of his life was to work for the salvation of his own countrymen. It was the vision in the temple that put the veto upon that, and he was only reconciled to his true mission by the hope, that he

[1] *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, p. 131.
[2] *Apostolic Age*, i., Book II. chap. i. "The Apostolic Vocation," p. 79 ff.

might provoke his own people to jealousy by that which was not a people, and so save some of them.

What did Paul's conversion mean for his own spiritual life? And we must answer this; for Paul's theology, Paul's presentation of Christian truth, was not the product of theoretic speculation, but is the record of his own spiritual experience. Was there anything in Paul's past life that will at all help us to understand this miraculous change, by which the most bitter persecutor became the most zealous propagandist of the cause of Christ? The attempt has been made to prove that Paul was agitated by profound perplexities as to the Messianic claims of Jesus even prior to his conversion, and that his persecuting zeal was due to a fiery determination to put down by force the noisy doubts within his own breast. But there is nothing to bear this out. On the other hand, the violence of his fury is evidence of interest, and not of indifference. He was alive to the momentousness of the proclamation of a Risen Messiah. Still more, with all his devotion to Judaism, Paul's best efforts after righteousness by way of the law had proved spiritually unsatisfying, did not rid him of the sense of alienation from God. He was crying, "What lack I yet?" When he came in contact with the Christians, he cannot but have been impressed with what they said about the forgiveness of sin through Christ, and with the calmness and peace they enjoyed through accepting it. And when Jesus met him on the way to Damascus, and proved to him thereby that He was the Risen Lord, at once he also accepted, in Christ, the deliverance from sin, for which he so long had yearned. This led him to understand the Cross. There Jesus had fulfilled the part described in Isa. liii., a passage evidently familiar to him. But this personal experience of the Messiah as no national deliverer, but a spiritual redeemer, one dealing not with outward conditions, but with the soul-needs of convicted sinners, when

reflected on, led to the thought of a wider range for the Messiah's work than the borders of Israel, namely, all mankind. And so he was prepared for the wider vocation for himself, although, as I have said, it was not his own private preference. Thus, Paul's conversion led up to his vocation, and is the clue to his theology.

All through his after-life he ransacks his own spiritual experience in order to meet the needs of his fellow-men. In that, as in every other feature of his life, he shows himself peculiarly the man for his task. He is a man of one idea: "to me to live is Christ," "this one thing I do," are characteristic utterances. And he is indomitable in the pursuit of his idea. His constitution was none of the most robust, but he would not allow it to hinder his restless energy and activity. He was of a sensitive, nervous temperament, a man of strong affections, who excited in others either intense antagonism or attachment. He showed extraordinary capacity to utilise everything he possessed or knew, for the cause with which he had identified himself. He would use the arguments of his opponents against themselves, quote scraps of Greek classics and current catchwords to gain the ear of the Greeks, adopt the gracious style of the philosopher to gain the Athenians, and debate with all the skill of a Jewish Rabbi with his own countrymen. Laying hold of fundamental principles, he found in them the answer to all questions of faith and practice; but he had a fine sense of the distinction between essentials that cannot be tampered with, and matters on which modifications are permissible to meet existing conditions, even although not in line with strict logical consistency. He was never the mere doctrinaire theologian, only anxious to preserve the unity of his system; was never afraid, in the interests of truth and right, to run the risk of seeming to contradict himself. He was eminently sane and conscientious to a degree, brave as a

lion, with the love of a father for his child towards all his converts. Indeed, his versatility is simply amazing; but the possession of it, by one of such sterling character as he, removes all wonder at the gracious divine intervention to secure such a man for the work of carrying the gospel beyond the limits of Judaism, and presenting it in its full magnificence as a world-wide way of salvation for men.

It is impossible to recall, even thus briefly, the character and life history of the men whom Jesus associated with Himself for the statement and circulation of the truth He came to announce, without being impressed with their variety and marked individuality. While almost all belonged to the one race of the Jews, yet through one or other of them a point of contact was secured with each of the predominant nationalities of the world of the day. James dominated the Mother Church. Peter developed rare capacity for enlisting the interest of the Jews of the Dispersion. Luke's Greek eyes noticed many a point that would have passed unnoted, through its very familiarity, by a Jew. Paul's civil privileges were his passport to many a Roman audience, which he could never otherwise have reached. Their occupations in life were qualifications. Peter and John, trained for working in the unseen, in that rare school of patience and faith, the thwarts of a fishing-boat, were prepared to manœuvre with line or net, as fishers of men. Paul's trade threw him into touch with the craftsmen in Corinth, and gave him the escape from every insinuation of time-serving and avarice in his preaching of the gospel. Matthew's work as clerk made him an accurate reporter. And the sympathy of Luke's nature, which made him a physician, gave him that intense sense for the more than human tenderness of Christ's gospel of cure for human heart-ills. Social position helped Mark and Paul, so that they were no *outré* louts in the court of a Roman

Governor at Crete, amid a group of Athenian philosophers, or in the pomp of an Eastern palace. Family affinity played its part in the making of James and of John. Jesus knew the hallowed influences of the home and family circle in which He Himself grew up, and that among its other members, the family type would be preserved. In personal characteristics, their temperament and disposition passed through all the scale of the broad geniality of Peter, the tender humanity of Luke, the youthful brilliance of Mark, the staid caution of James, the unslumbering, all-embracing energy and versatility of mind and heart of Paul, and the intense, rapt contemplation of John. Their spiritual experiences were just as varied, and the lines by which they came into touch with Jesus Christ. And if, for convenience, we call the radical change, which each passed through, by the one name conversion, yet the lesson of the variety here is that that process is as various in its method as the men who undergo it. One very marked difference, which distinguished Paul from most of the others, must be more than simply referred to. They mostly only arrived at the full knowledge of what Christ and His gospel were by gradually deepening personal acquaintance with Him and instruction from Him, only reaching full understanding of the profoundest secret after the painful shock and suspense of the death and burial and the joyful surprise and rally of the Resurrection, in the light of which the full significance of the Cross gradually emerged. They passed from the personal impression of the Son of man to adoring regard for the Son of God. In Paul, in large measure, this process was reversed. So far, his experience was more like that of James, but at second hand. He had heard of the life of Jesus, but it was nothing to him. All he may have heard of His amiability and grace was simply reduced to less than nothing by what he regarded as the blasphemy of His pretensions. His first personal touch

was with the Risen, Living Lord, and it was from the complete satisfaction of the needs of his soul by Him, that he was awakened to interest in the events of His life in the flesh. In both cases, what was of supreme importance was the Resurrection and Ascension. But, with the original disciples that was a climax and culmination; with Paul it was the starting-point of a new development, and of the operation of a set of interests which immediately became paramount in his life and experience. But this is only the most marked of the many distinctions among this beautifully varied group, among whom and for His own great purposes, according to His constant plan, God grants

> "Each new man, by some as new a mode,
> Inter-communication with Himself,
> Wreaking on finiteness infinitude;
> By such a series of effects, gives each
> Last His own imprint; old yet ever new
> The process: 'tis the way of Deity."[1]

Such a varied group was well suited to be recipients of the new revelation Jesus came to communicate, and in their turn to present it, in an immense variety of lights and to widely diversified natures. Among so many different minds it could not possibly subside into a set of stereotyped formulæ. The teaching of Jesus, whatever it was, which could captivate and enthral such a variety of natures, must have been living, many-sided truth, capable of Protean transformations; but this, not in order to evade, but in order to court, attention and compel adhesion.

But the question may fairly be raised, Is there any justification for regarding these writers as more than interested adherents of the cause of Christ, who have of their own accord left us a record of a movement, with which they were themselves closely identified? Can we regard their presentation of the teaching of Christ as in

[1] Browning, *Prince Hohenstiel Schwangan*, 132.

any sense authoritative? Have we any indication as to this of the mind of Him, of whom they speak? Does He give them any commission? Do they write with any consciousness of responsibility? A reply to these questions will be reached by observing Christ's attitude toward them, and theirs toward Him and His teaching.

As regards Christ's attitude towards them, in the very forefront stands this fact: they were almost all personally selected and invited by Christ to enter His service. That has already come out in our notice of their individual lives, and need not be further elaborated. But what is still more significant, those of them who met with Christ in the days of His flesh underwent a special course of training at His hands.[1] And not only so, but they were led by Him to expect accessions to their privileged ranks. Nothing else than this is implied in that striking correction to the exclusiveness of John (Mark ix. 33–42; Luke ix. 46–50). John had found a man casting out devils in Christ's name, and forbade him, because he did not follow Jesus along with the rest. But shortly after he heard Jesus speaking in the most liberal terms of the right to recognition of the humblest child that acted or spoke in His name; and misgivings awoke as to what he had done, and he reported the case to Jesus. And the reply of Jesus confirmed his misgiving, "Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us." Note that this follows immediately Christ's solemn statement, as to the respect and attention to which He would regard His humblest disciple as entitled—"He that receiveth a child in My name, receiveth Me"; and you feel how significant an utterance it is. It means that the same must be true for men like this, and that leaves a place open for Paul, and

[1] Weizsäcker's treatment of this section of the subject is painfully hesitating, unwilling to let go the fact, but equally unwilling to admit the historical reliability of the record. *Apostolic Age*, i. 28 ff.

Mark, and Luke. The mission of the Seventy must have suggested the same thought (Luke x. 1 ff.). And doubtless the apostles felt that they were acting in the spirit of Christ, when they selected one to fill up the first vacancy among the Twelve (Acts i. 15–26). This becomes still more abundantly clear, when Paul appears on the scene. At that memorable conference at Jerusalem, he met and compared notes with James, Cephas, and John, the recognised heads of the Church. But these men, who had enjoyed the privilege of the training of Christ while on earth, recognised that Paul had arrived at substantially the same fundamental truths as themselves by an independent course of training by the Spirit of Christ, and that therefore he was entitled to regard himself—as he did—as occupying exactly their own position, that of Christ-trained men (Gal. ii. 1–10).

The lines of the training, pursued by Christ, are very clearly indicated in the Gospels, and they make plain the purpose He had in view, and the position He intended His accredited disciples ultimately to occupy. The passage in Mark, which records their selection, states the case thus: "He goeth up into the mountain, and calleth unto Him whom He Himself would," or, better, "whom He wished Himself (the pronoun is emphatic: it is the counterpart of what is said in John xv. 16, 'Ye did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit'); and they went unto Him. And He appointed twelve, in order that they might be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach, and to have authority to cast out devils" (Mark iii. 13–15). This brings out that the Saviour's purpose was to associate those men closely and constantly with Himself, train them to an intelligent apprehension of His message to mankind, and leave to them its dissemination among those whom He could not overtake in person. The training did not

consist simply in securing that they should hear, constantly and continuously, what the multitude only heard in fragments. But as any one, who turns to Bruce's *Training of the Twelve*, can see at a glance, it was a progressive initiation into the deepest truths of the gospel. To them He explained the principles of His parables (Matt. xiii. 10–23, and parallels). He met, with the greatest readiness, their requests for explanations (Matt. xiii. 36 ff. etc.). He withdrew with them into sequestered parts of Galilee, where He was unknown, that He might carry out this teaching undisturbed. As His mission drew to a close, it seems to have absorbed most of His time and attention. He was not content to inform. He despatched them more than once on preaching tours, giving them as their theme of preaching, "the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," a fraction of His own first message. A whole chapter, Matt. x., is nothing but a record of instructions, minute and detailed, for the prosecution of such a mission. When they returned, He heard their report and checked incipient mistakes. He examined them again and again on their progress. He sometimes followed up a round of instruction with the inquiry, "Have ye understood all these things?" (Matt. xiii. 51). And as the preliminary test of their capacity for a great new announcement, He asked, "Whom say ye that I am?"[1]

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the training was directed exclusively, or even chiefly, to the minds of the disciples. Quite as pronounced was the effort to engender in them a kindred spirit to His own. That was the meaning of His wish, that they should be with Him. That is why, when He recalls it, He speaks of it, not as a time of drill between a master and his servants, but as a time of exchange of confidences among friends: "I call you

[1] See J. Weiss (*Nachfolge Christi*, 16 pp.), who is instructive, in spite of hair-splitting distinctions.

not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things I heard from My Father, I made known unto you" (John xv. 15). It was this anxiety that called out the stern rebuke to Peter: "Thou savourest not—hast no taste for—the things that be of God, but those that be of men" (Matt. xvi. 23), and that other word, whenever it was spoken: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of" (Luke ix. 55). This spiritual susceptibility, responsiveness to the presence and importance of the things that are unseen, was His fervent desire for His disciples. Failure in them to grip the deeper meanings of things always disappointed Him. "How is it that ye do not understand?" (Mark viii. 21)—He asked it when they treated His warning against the leaven of the Pharisees, as if it were a kind of veto on bakers who belonged to that sect. And many a time the same feeling arose in His mind. On the other hand, every glimmer of growing perception called out deep joy and glowing encomium. Look at the delight with which He hailed Peter's penetration of the disguise of His humility: "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven" (Matt. xvi. 17 ff.). Peter's spiritual sense had grown. He had begun to share with Christ Himself the guidance from above. And so, when the disciples told with pride of their victories over the unclean spirits, He checks that: "In this rejoice not; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Luke x. 20). Their spiritual privileges were the choicest gift He had secured for them. It was their best equipment for the work for which He designed them. The reason He attached such importance to the spirit was this. The truth He had taught them, the news they were to spread, was not in the first instance very abstruse. More could be done to commend it by the strange magnetic attractiveness of lives pulsating with spiritual faith than by mere erudition. Jesus

knew how it would be. And His anticipations were amply verified. It was not their learning that overwhelmed the Sanhedrin, when Peter and John appeared before its bar. Their inquisitors could still "perceive that they were unlearned and ignorant men." But they could not deny their power, nor resist the wisdom or the spirit with which they spoke. And what was the admitted secret of it? "They had been with Jesus" (Acts iv. 13). They had learned in His school, and had acquired that παῤῥησία with which He spoke, with its marvellous mastery over the souls of men, begotten of that profound consciousness of the constant presence to faith of the Unseen, the Divine.

Jesus had always contemplated that His disciples should be apostles, messengers for Him to a larger audience. All the training had this in view. And so He tells them, as He sends them away, the use they are to make of His teaching: "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, that proclaim ye upon the housetops" (Matt. x. 27). He teaches them reserve, till the opportune time arrives, as in the case of the Transfiguration: "Tell the vision to no man, till the Son of man be risen again from the dead" (Matt. xvii. 9); while His comment on Mary's anointing of Him shows how He expected His gospel to spread: "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her" (Matt. xxvi. 13). The same thought they overheard in the Intercessory Prayer: "As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world. . . . I pray not for these alone, but for them also that believe on Me through their word" (John xvii. 18, 20). And all through the farewell discourses in John, the teaching as to the gift of the Spirit is in line with earlier and repeated promises of His presence in the hour of emergency (Matt. x. 20; cf. Luke xxi. 14, 15; Mark xiii. 11). It simply extends, for aid

through the whole range of spiritual understanding, the promise given for the hour of distress. They are not able, as He speaks to them, to take in or appropriate all He has to say to them. There are many things to say, but they cannot yet bear them. But the Holy Spirit of truth will come and guide them into all the truth, bring all things to their remembrance, show them things to come, take of Christ's and show them unto them. Just because His departure was essential to this marvellous spiritual equipment, Christ was the more ready to go. "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go away, I shall send Him unto you." And then, what follows? *Ἐλθών*, "having come," *i.e.* to the disciples and, therefore, now through them, "He will convict the world in respect of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." The passage in John xvi. 8 is the explanation of the earlier statement at the close of chap. xv. 26, 27: "When the Comforter is come, whom I shall send to you from the Father . . . He shall bear witness of Me; and ye also bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning." The intervening verses (xvi. 1–7) simply come in to break the staggering force of the now clearly indicated fact, that the disciples will have to stand without the visible company of Christ, encounter opposition, and spread the news of Christ in the face of it. But for this work they will be fully equipped, mentally and spiritually, by the fortifying indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And this is no peculiarly Johannine view, an aspect of the apostolic mission attributed to Christ by John alone. It is just as emphatic in the writings of Luke. There it is the grand subject of intercourse between the Risen Christ and His apostles. His conversation on the way to Emmaus is a grand exposition from prophecy of the Messianic pathway, by suffering, to glory (Luke xxiv. 26, 27). When the same evening He meets with the whole

band, it is to repeat the lesson, assert its world-wide significance, and conclude, "Ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke xxiv. 46–49). When you turn to the first chapter of the Acts, it is to find this repeated, and to have the promise explained by Christ as a baptism in the Holy Spirit; and again, "ye shall be My witnesses" (ver. 8). John gives the same account of the parting commissions of the Risen Lord: "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John xx. 21–23). What exactly that "Power of the Keys," here, as in Matt. xviii. 18, extended from Peter to all the apostles, includes I do not stay to inquire. But at least it covers this, that to them was committed, for the use of men, the knowledge of the way of salvation. It would lie with them, who possessed this knowledge, whether and where that way would be opened, and thus they stand before us, equipped and commissioned by Christ to take His place and carry on His work after His return to His Father, just as we see them at the close of Matthew receiving the fateful order: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 18–20). Christ regarded His chosen apostles as fully qualified and authoritative exponents of His mission to a world audience.

But this is the answer to only half of the question which was raised. For how did the apostles, Paul included, regard themselves? Did they recognise the dignity and responsi-

bility which Christ designed for them as the accredited exponents of His teaching and mission? They did absolutely. Their actions and their words alike attest it. Having received such a promise of the Holy Spirit, they waited for its fulfilment with childlike faith and expectation. And when Pentecost came, they hailed its gift with eager delight. From that moment, whenever they speak, they assert their right and duty to do so. Christ had said, "Ye shall be witnesses after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Filled with the Spirit, they say, "we are witnesses"; "we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard"; "we must obey God rather than man" (Acts iv. 20, v. 32). In the very same spirit, John commences his first Epistle: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us." He felt that what it was his privilege to have enjoyed by fellowship with Christ was no private favour, but a public trust, in which every believer had a right to share; and hence it was his duty to pass on the truth, which he had learned in and with Christ. Paul, when he is writing to the Corinthians, and seeking in the most forceful way to impress them with the seriousness of the issues, in their dealing with what he has to say to them, elaborates the significance of the position which the apostles hold. He takes his own case and tells them the nature and source of his acquaintance with Christ and His truth. He reveals the moving impulses of his apostolic activity. And he fixes the exact position of an apostle, when he says, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. . . . God gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation. . . . We are ambassadors therefore for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us" (2 Cor. v. 19, 20).[1]

[1] Cf. Rom. x. 14, *οὗ οὐκ ἤκουσαν*, How can they believe on Him whom they have not heard preaching? "It must be so translated, and what follows must be interpreted by assuming that the preaching of Christ's messengers is

The position, however, in which they felt that Christ had placed them, produced on them a twofold effect. It begot in them a strong assertion of their own, and the recognition of each other's, independence of all other teachers, and the repudiation of all authority but Christ's; and it also inspired the feeling of absolute dependence upon Him. "Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Teacher. Call no man your father on the earth: for one is your Father. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even the Christ" (Matt. xxiii. 8–10). To this they responded exactly. The first clause, in each case, expressed the one side of their attitude; the second clause the other.

None has expressed the first side of it more emphatically than Paul. Not that he held it more strongly than the others; but his authority was repeatedly challenged, and he had to vindicate his rights, both in Galatia and in Corinth. When he tells the Galatians about that memorable conference at Jerusalem (Gal. ii. 1–10), it is not because he felt he needed to invoke the authority of James, Peter, and John in order to strengthen his own. It is only to show the perfect understanding that existed between them, and the way in which they recognised each other's rights and authority. Again and again he rings out the declaration that he is an apostle, not of man, nor through man. His gospel was not after man. He did not receive it from man, nor was he taught it; but it came to him through revelation of Jesus Christ. And what Paul claimed, the leaders of the Church had been the first to acknowledge. As they claimed an independent position for themselves, they were quick to accord it to him, and he to accord it to them.[1] In the Epistles to the Corinthians

identical with the preaching of Christ Himself" (Sanday and Headlam's *Commentary*, *in loco*).

[1] The sarcasm in Paul's reference to James, Peter, and John as those "who seemed to be pillars," is directed not against them but against his opponents. These opponents impugned his authority on the ground that it was without the

he writes in the same strain, sweeping aside Paul, Apollos, Cephas, as all of no importance—God all in all; Christ the only foundation. But the parable of the conflagration, which follows, teaches the terrible responsibility of each builder for the work he reared on the foundation (1 Cor. iii. 5–15). On another page, in equally graphic terms, he acknowledges the rights of others, but claims the same for himself, and with biting irony exposes the pretensions of any who would dispute it (1 Cor. ix. 1ff.). But in this attitude of Paul you have simply the definite expression of the tone, that runs through the utterances of every one of the New Testament teachers. And it is expressly endorsed by the emphatic sentences, with which John closes his Revelation. As a man inspired and commissioned by Christ, he pronounces a solemn curse upon anyone who dared to add to, or take from, his book; and why? It is not his own authority that would thus be impugned. It is the authority of his Master. "He which testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly." It is the Lord Himself. "Amen: come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. xxii. 20).

That brings us to the other side of it. This self-assertiveness is simply the counterpart of a most absolute dependence upon the common Master. "One is your Master," says Christ; "ye call Me, Master, and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am" (John xiii. 13). There Jesus describes the position to which His disciples responded, and which they took up towards Him. Led on by that strange, subtle instinct of the human heart, by which it is ever drawn to the one to whom it can yield unfaltering allegiance, the hearts of these men turned to Christ; and

countenance of the pillars of the Church at Jerusalem. Paul proves that he is in complete accord and thorough mutual understanding with James, Peter, and John, the men whom he always took to be the pillar apostles; but seemingly, according to his adversaries, he must have been mistaken in thinking them so. It must be some others who were properly so styled, and to whom his adversaries were appealing. But who were they? It was for the adversaries to say. Not James, Peter, and John, for they were at one with Paul.

impressed by His transcendent embodiment of truth and right, they felt that they need, they could, go no farther. He spoke as one having authority. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (John vi. 68). He was to them embodied conscience, living truth, living law. His matchless character and profound insight into divine truth bent their souls to His service without challenge or demur. "Theirs not to make reply, theirs not to reason why." They had simply to carry out His commission. And so, when James sits down to write, it is as "servant, bond-slave, of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ"; John's Revelation has come to "the slave of Jesus Christ"; and Paul calls himself now Christ's "apostle," and now His "slave." Their only authority for speaking is His commission.

Again, it is Paul who strikes the keynote. "That which I have received of the Lord—by revelation—have I delivered unto you" (1 Cor. xi. 23). What He has taught is the gospel, and there is no other. "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other . . . let him be accursed" (Gal. i. 8, 9). But what makes this note of absolute dependence on Christ all the more emphatic, is the way in which, in reply to the questions addressed to him from Corinth, Paul discriminates (1 Cor. vii. 10, 12, 25, 40). There are things which he can settle by direct appeal to the words of Christ. "I command; yet not I, but the Lord." And he then quotes an express judgment of Christ. For other things he had no such express word, but gave his own judgment. Yet here he still spoke with the same firmness; and why? Because, with just a tone of ironical hesitation, he can say, "I think I have the Spirit of God." "He that is spiritual judgeth all things . . . we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. ii. 15). "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you,

that they are the commandment of the Lord" (1 Cor. xiv. 37). Windows these into the workings of Paul's mind. They let us see the way in which he understood loyalty to Christ's teaching. In His gospel he had received the truth of the deep things of God, the key to all true living and thinking. Under the guidance of God's Spirit he had simply to follow out these fundamental truths to their legitimate issues, and he was still only the exponent of the mind of Christ, teaching not another gospel, only tracing the ramifications of the truth as it is in Jesus. And if, as all this suggests, Professor Bruce is right in regarding Paul as a sample of the ideal disciple for whom Jesus craved, a man who, out of a weary experience of the unsatisfactoriness of all earthly systems of philosophy and religion, was ready to welcome the invitation, "Come unto Me," "Learn of Me,"[1] then we may take it that in Paul's view of his own relation to Christ is bound up a profound conviction, that he can say nothing worth listening to but what he has learnt in the school of Christ, and therefore says nothing else. In all his teaching he only repeats his own lesson. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord; and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. It is the God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who shone in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 5, 6). Paul is but a lamp or a mirror to diffuse the light of Christ. He dare not vary from the truth even in trivial matters (2 Cor. i. 17–23). Christ's yea was yea, and His nay, nay; and from the day Paul took Him as Master, or rather He engaged Paul as His servant, Paul must speak as He spoke, nothing but what was gospel certainty, Christ's truth.[2]

[1] See his wonderfully suggestive discussion of Matt. xi. 25 ff., *With Open Face*, 140.

[2] For a very frank acknowledgment of this attitude of Paul, see Weizsäcker, *Apostolic Age*, i. 135 f.

It is in the same spirit John records the solemn protest, which he evoked by an ill-directed act of homage, addressed to the Angel from whom he had received the revelation of the victory of Christ's cause. "He saith unto me, These are true words of God. And I fell down before his feet to worship him. And he saith unto me, See thou do it not; I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren that hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix. 10).

What the Synoptists record, brings them exactly into line with the other writers, notably the very remarkable words given by all three in the Transfiguration story. "This is my beloved Son . . . hear ye Him" (Matt. xvii. 5; Mark ix. 7; Luke ix. 35). What fastened in their memories the words, Hear ye Him? These words were spoken by God, when side by side with Jesus stood Moses and Elijah, the premier representatives of the old economy, the most carefully accredited mouthpieces by whom God had hitherto spoken to men; and by this divine pronouncement the attention of Christ's disciples was deliberately diverted from the older messengers, and riveted upon their beloved Master as now the authoritative spokesman for God upon earth. But that is not all. Jesus was talking there with these old messengers about the new truth He had just begun to communicate to His disciples, the fact that He must die. That had proved too much for the disciples' credence or intelligence. They would not believe it: they could not understand it. But just at this juncture God comes in with His imprimatur upon the utterances of Jesus. "This is My beloved Son; hear ye Him." In effect He says, no matter what previous writers or speakers have said, no matter how incomprehensible the deliverance may seem, believe above all others, and on this subject as on every other, just what Jesus says: "This is My beloved Son; hear ye *Him*." The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews seems to have caught the

spirit of the situation. His whole Epistle is an elaborate proof of the superiority of the sacrificial work of Christ over the Mosaic ritual of sacrifice; and how does he introduce his theme? He writes like one who had been on the Transfiguration Mount, who certainly had heard of the event. He describes the Saviour in terms that suggest it at every turn. He brings us face to face with Him in His glory. And he says, "God, having of old time spoken unto the Fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us by His Son . . . therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them . . . how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? which, having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard, God bearing witness with them" (Heb. i. 1 ff.). That is the uniform attitude of these New Testament writers. They turn with one consent to Jesus as their authority. They regard His teaching as supreme. They regard themselves simply as transmitters, each in his own way, of what they have learned by revelation and spiritual experience from Christ through His Spirit. They are ruled by the Transfiguration word, which they cannot forget: Hear ye Him.

But we only fully appreciate the conception which all these men had of the authority of the teaching of Christ, when we lay to heart another utterance that has been preserved by John: "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3). For Jesus, and so for John, to live is to know rightly. Living and knowing are convertible terms. Truth is life, and so for man the perfect lesson in truth is the perfect life. Understand that, and we understand John's dictum, "The Life was the Light of men" (John i. 4). Truth, he means, does not consist in abstract dicta, soulless formulæ, products of the intellect alone, to be

learnt by efforts of the mind. It is rather something that demands the play of our whole being with all its faculties to apprehend it. It is to be reached, not in fragments, nor by careful piecing together of parts, but as it stands out in all its rare attractiveness, the beautiful harmony and consistency of all things, in one stupendous living whole; and there love sees deeper, faith makes more daring discoveries, than the deliberations of the mind. Hence, a revealer is better fitted to communicate truth, than the most perfect of messages. He becomes the message. His person, his personality, his life-work, his execution of it, give meaning and authority to his words, and ply their combined influence upon a man's whole mental and spiritual manhood. They inspire confidence and respect, enlist devotion and attachment, which in turn secure attention to weighty and even to unwelcome aspects of truth, which, otherwise, men would willingly ignore. And it was in this way the apostles regarded Jesus of Nazareth. He was the Truth and the Life (John xiv. 6). That Life was the Light of men. His personality was as eloquent to them as His most striking sayings in life and character.[1] They are as keen to record a significant deed as to minute a weighty saying. His death taught them more of its own meaning than did His most patient and persistent exposition of the law of service and ransom, by which He sought to prepare them for it. Christ is their Teacher. He is also their Lesson—not His words only, but His life, His whole life, from eternity to eternity, in which the sojourn on earth is only the episode most significant for earth's inhabitants. They were so impressed with this, that it produced no surprise in them, no shock of astonishment, to hear Him in naïve and artless fashion make the most astounding announcements, and take the greatest liberties with

[1] "Die Predigt Jesu ist nur ein Reflex seiner Person," Chapuis, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, v. 278.

their most sacred traditions. He would revise a divine law with a "Ye have heard that it has been said . . . but I say unto you." He would claim an intimacy with the Father, and a directness of instructions from Him, that scandalised other men. But to those who knew Him, there was ever with it such manifest candour, such absence of ostentation, such gravity, earnestness, sincerity, that they felt that it was like His miracles, the natural and right thing for Him to say or do, only the self-revelation of a truthful spirit, that could not suppress such important facts without being untrue to itself. It confirmed their confidence that He was the Master.

CHAPTER III

The Features of Christ's Teaching

I. The Substance of Christ's Teaching—Summary attempted—Tested by Effects actually produced by the Teaching, viz. Popularity, Antagonism, Wane of Popularity.

II. Chief Characteristics of the Teaching—Originality—Authority—Both explained by Christ's Personality—By Jesus Himself directly—and indirectly through Manner of Teaching.

III. Methods of Christ's Teaching—(1) Repetition, illustrated by Sermon on the Mount, and by Vindication of His miraculous Powers—Adopted by His Apostles—(2) Accommodation—This in line with Incarnation—Affected His general Attitude to current Ideas—Determined His Adoption of Parable—Illustrated by His Treatment of the Pharisees—This Method pursued by Apostles—(3) Progressive unfolding of the Truth—Evidences of it—Was it a Method or due to Modification of His Teaching?—Evidence of the Sources, especially Luke and the Sermon on the Mount—It is a Method—Followed by Apostles—Its Order to be followed here.

To the writers of the New Testament Christ was the supreme authority. He had trained them for the reception of a message, and commissioned them to bear it to their fellow-men. And they responded by regarding themselves as men deputed by Him, and responsible to Him, for carrying on His work. Some did the work in one way, some in another, each following the bent of his own genius. The evangelists reduced to writing the story of the Life, with wealth of characteristic incident and striking phrase. The writers of the Epistles brought their spiritual experience at the hands of the Spirit as their contribution to the enlightenment and quickening of their fellow-Christians in the knowledge of Christ. And historian and seer in turn traced,

the one the operation of His revelation as the days went by, the other the prospect of the play of His great principles in conflict with and triumph over the forces of the world. But it is necessary to go back on the mass of incident and speech, which constitutes our knowledge of the historic Jesus, and conveys to us the content of His teaching,—His "doctrine," as He calls it,—and see what the substance of it actually was. How did Jesus regard it, and what were His methods in communicating it to others? What were the features of Christ's mode of teaching, and how are these reflected in the teachings of His school? The treatment of this does not involve an attempt at a nice analysis of Christ's style and manner, interesting and important as that may be. It is the substance of the teaching with which we are dealing. For the rest, it may be enough to say that Jesus was, what every preacher, teacher, should be—He was Himself. That gave His teaching the magnetic force. He was the Truth and the Life. He was perfectly natural, and His nature explains the Way.

I. What was, then, the substance of Christ's teaching?

It is a little difficult to summarise the great basal truths which Christ taught without seeming to ignore many matters on which He shed such a flood of light that they all seem to demand mention. But meantime something like this may suffice. He spoke with steady enthusiasm of the Kingdom of God, as He calls it. And what He ultimately meant by that was a great spiritual association, in which God's will is supreme, and in which men are banded together as brethren in common allegiance to God as their sole rightful Lord. A place within this association is open to any man who desires it. None have prescriptive rights to it; none are disqualified or proscribed admission. Within it equal spiritual privileges are open to all. The only thing that counts is character, holy character. That is the supreme test of membership in this association, which

indeed is much like a family, with God at its head as Father. And when "holy" is used to describe the character, it connotes nothing merely formal, external, ritual, but moral excellence, fused with the religious spirit. This holy character can only be attained by a spiritual reformation, which is just as necessary in the cultured and respectable as in the ignorant and debased, and is brought about by an overpowering appeal to the hearts and consciences of men, which wakes into life that spiritual vision and grip which Christ calls faith. The substance and strength of the appeal lies in Christ Himself, in the mysterious fact of His death on the Cross for men. Here is the core and key to all Christ's teaching. It is the justification of His demand of loyal obedience and service, which is flawless only when it bears the marks of the Cross, and which, faithfully rendered, reduces all mere ritual to the secondary, and puts it quite into the shade.

To convey this teaching to the minds of men, Christ made use of the current ideas, hopes, and aspirations of His countrymen. He fitted it into the framework of their religious and national conceptions. He illustrated it in the homeliest ways, drawing unexpected parallels between the familiar incidents of everyday life or patent facts of nature and the world of spirit, with which he lived in constant touch, and which He came to reveal. For, as is apparent from the brief *résumé* of the teaching just given, the supreme concern of Jesus is with the world of spirit, the unseen, the eternal, the divine. It is God, and the relation of God to man and man to God, and that as the controlling factor in every other relation in life. That is what He deals with. That is the dominant theme. Anything else is there only as contributory or explanatory.

We can test the correctness of this, as a sketch of the teaching of Jesus, by considering the reception it met with and the effects it produced. These were very pronounced.

On the one hand and in the first instance, the teaching of Jesus evoked an extraordinary outburst of enthusiasm among the general public, the common people. It swept everything before it. Adverse critics were ignored, and had to confess "we prevail nothing; the world is gone after Him" (John xii. 19). Just as pronounced was the hostility He aroused among a very powerful and determined section of the community, so bitter, indeed, that it hatched a plot to put Him to death. And there is a third factor, not less noteworthy; namely, the subsequent waning of the popularity, and that not on account of the efforts of His adversaries, but owing to features of prime importance in the teaching, which at first were ignored or misunderstood by early admirers and adherents. Will what we have sketched tally with and explain these results?

First, as to the popularity. "The common people heard Him gladly" (Mark xii. 37). And the reason they gave for it was that He spoke with authority and not as the scribes (Matt. vii. 29; Mark i. 22). But what do common people hear gladly from one who can speak with authority? It is things that are said plainly, simply, and in homely, intelligible phrase, on those matters about which they are most profoundly concerned. And these, if we only know how to elicit the fact, are the great interests of heart and life. Men want to know about their origin and their destiny. They like to hear about their relations to their fellow-men. They gladly listen to anybody who can speak to them with some authority and knowledge about God. As Arthur Clough says, in a quaint poem, exposing the sophistries by which, from interested motives, men try to argue themselves out of the belief that there is a God—

> "But country folks who live beneath
> The shadow of the steeple;
> The parson and the parson's wife,
> And mostly married people;

Youths green and happy in first love,
So thankful for illusion ;
And men caught out in what the world
Calls guilt, in first confusion ;

And almost everyone when age,
Disease, or sorrows strike him,
Inclines to think there is a God,
Or something very like Him."

Thinking this, they are intensely anxious to know the truth about Him, and Jesus fully met that craving. He could tell them about God at first hand. God was His Father. He could tell them about His Kingdom, and the ways of it, as if He had been in it. He seemed to weave it all into their family and national life, so that the burden vanished from their domestic cares and civil wrongs, and they were flooded with rays of hope. The teaching does explain the popularity.

But it equally explains the antagonism. There may be something in a speaker's manner that rouses hostility and resentment. There are men who have such an offensive way of saying even things with which we heartily agree, that they almost lead us to abandon them. But even at its worst, mere manner will never explain antagonism so deadly, that nothing but death will satisfy it. It is the substance of teaching which does that. Now Christ's teaching struck at privilege on every hand. He swept it aside in terms of man's relation to God. There He was the great Leveller, and from that the process spreads in every direction. This the privileged classes were quick to see, and they were immediately in league against Him. What were the privileges of the priestly class worth, when Jesus taught men that they could go straight to God for themselves, and Gerizim or Jerusalem was really of no importance, since God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him? (John iv. 24).

What ground did He leave for the scribes' pride of learning? He made the mysteries of religion common property, reduced the law to a single principle, difficult to practise indeed, but easily understood, even by the youngest child. They must drop their sneer—"this people that knoweth not the law is accursed"—when Jesus says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of God." Just as disastrous for the Pharisees' fastness of righteousness was the rude shock with which He brought down, like a house of cards, the whole building of toilsome formalism and worrying minute detail. The Pharisee and the publican pray side by side in the temple, and the man who, standing afar off, with downcast eyes and beating heart, cries, "God be merciful to me, the sinner," goes down to his house justified rather than the other. And political parties, though they might affect an airy indifference,—a Herod and his men of war set Him at nought,—yet knew instinctively that a deadly blow was struck at tyranny and aggression, when Jesus made it plain that religion was in reality no mere public function, but a solemn personal relationship between a man and his God alone; or, if it meant more, a regulative influence in his relations with all his fellow-men, no matter what their nationality. Everyone of these classes, therefore, with all their army of sycophants, the lovers of money and the slaves of fashion, at once conceived a deadly hostility to Christ, dogged His steps, vilified His miracles, laid traps for His speech, plotted and ultimately perpetrated His murder. And it was the teaching that caused it, as it opened wide and wider still the arms of God's love, proclaiming "there is no respect of persons with God."

But still further, the teaching, as summarised, explains the wane of the popularity. What all the malignant efforts of His enemies could not do, Jesus did Himself. He turned the tide of popularity, till it ebbed completely away. It

was soon apparent to Jesus that many of His adherents had a very mistaken notion of what the essence of His teaching was. Hence, although He was intensely anxious to secure disciples, He deliberately set Himself to destroy their illusions. Bluntly and baldly, so that there might be no after-reflections, disappointments, or recriminations, He gave the greatest publicity to the demands of self-denial and suffering, which His service entails. True, He preached a Kingdom, but He was the King, and He had not where to lay His head; and He would make no promises without suffering for this world. He would not let them give Him an earthly crown. He flouted their cupboard love. And with more and more precision emphasised the spiritual and its supremacy (John vi.). To Him they must come, follow Him, and follow Him along the way of the Cross, or they could not be His disciples. Their Kingdom and His were in complete antagonism; the one essentially worldly,—a condition of unbroken health, ease, affluence, enjoyment; the other pre-eminently spiritual, with holiness and self-sacrifice for its watchwords. All this He plainly announced. Though it might, must, mean desertion by hundreds, He would not allow men to follow Him to what must otherwise be a rude awakening to disappointment and chagrin. In spite of all His efforts, one man persisted, and what was the issue? Disillusionment, resolve on revenge, betrayal, and self-destruction,—Judas Iscariot. To prevent tragedies like that, Christ plainly told the worst, as the world thinks it, of His Kingdom; and waning popularity was the inevitable result.

Our summary stands the test. It embodies the substance of His teaching.

II. But, now, two features of it press for attention, and they are these: the originality of the teaching, and the authoritativeness with which Jesus propounded it. Nobody that ever met with Jesus could fail to be struck by these

features. Ordinary folks said, "He spake with authority, and not as the scribes." The servants of His enemies, even at the risk of incurring their masters' displeasure, left Him undisturbed, and excused their inaction on the plea, "Never man spake like this man" (John vii. 46). And their masters might try to explain it away, with an air of superior wisdom, to perplexed inquirers, but they are left themselves with these two questions, that are significant admissions of Christ's power, "How knoweth this man letters (learning, scholarly accomplishments, γράμματα),[1] having never learned" (studied, been through the schools) (John vii. 15), and "by what authority doest Thou these things, and who gave Thee this authority?" (Matt. xxi. 23; Mark xi. 28). They are the two questions that men are asking still. The facts are indubitable. Where are the answers to be got?

You do not answer the first question, and maintain the originality of Jesus, by submitting a triumphant array of novel ideas in ethics, religion, and philosophy, all first uttered by Him. There are striking characteristic phrases, pregnant with new truth, that fell from His lips, about "the Gospel," "the Kingdom of God," "My Father," "your Father" (I put it with the personal pronoun, for that is even more original than "the Father"), "the Son of man," "Eternal Life," "the Cross." But it is not in single propositions the originality of Jesus is to be found. Neither is it impaired, though painstaking collectors have discovered, throughout the world's previous records, parallels to sayings supposed to be peculiarly His own. Just as little does it lie in the marvellous freshness with which, in parable, aphorism, and paradox, with uniform grace and simplicity, He clothes the expression of His thoughts. Dr. John Watson cannot intend us to take him seriously, when he

[1] Field (*Notes*, p. 92) says it means elementary learning; but Plato (*Apol.* 26 D) uses it as equivalent to μαθήματα, *i.e.* scholarship.

contrasts Jesus and His disciple Paul as stylists, and vindicates the superiority of Jesus because of Paul's supposed literary defects, ". . . overwrought by feeling . . . illustrations forced . . . treatment of certain subjects—say marriage and asceticism—somewhat wanting in sweetness."[1] It is not a question of style. If one may attempt to put it in words at all, the originality lies in the vitalising power which He infused into every word he uttered, and which gave at last operative force to ideas that had already floated before the minds of men, been fixed for a moment in words, and then been forgotten. To use Bruce's phrase, it was "His ability to convert conceivable possibilities into indubitable realities."[2] "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

And what account can you give of authority but its existence? When Christ was questioned about it, He replied with a question which was intended to test the willingness of His interrogators to admit the logic of facts, and when it showed them unwilling, He declined to say by what authority He acted. The only real gauge of authority is capacity to exercise it. Men are never in reality kings, lawgivers, priests, or teachers "by the law of a carnal commandment." They only become so in virtue of inherent capacity, "after the power of intense, indissoluble life" (Heb. vii. 16). In one word, originality and novelty, authority and imperiousness, are not identical or convertible terms.

These facts tell us that we must look for the explanation of these features of Christ's teaching in nothing else than the personality of Jesus Himself. Jesus was, in a profound sense, an original, and the originality of His teaching was due to its origin. Its authority was due to its author. Henley says with great truth, in his sketch of Burns, after

[1] *Mind of the Master*, p. 38.
[2] *Apologetics*, p. 501; cf. Horton, *Proverbs*, p. 318.

showing the extent to which he drew upon the store of the past, just as Shakespeare did, for his material, "he cannot fairly be said to have contributed anything to it except himself."[1] But that was everything. Still more so of Christ. In the highest plane of human life, to the cravings of the human heart after God, after the truth about Him, what Jesus contributed, His most original gift, that which imparted a new vitality to all that had ever been said before, was Himself. But then it follows that His teaching, "the indispensable commentary on His life," as Holtzmann calls it,[2] could not but be original. The personality gave it character and power.

And this is how Jesus accounts for His own teaching. It comes out both directly and indirectly; directly, in the statements He has made with regard to it; indirectly, in the way in which He sought to make it tell on others. Looking at these in turn, one is struck with the contrast between Paul and His Master. Both speak to other men in accents of command; but with the one the message and the authority alike are derived, with the other they are primary and direct. Both speak by revelation; but the revelation to the one is from without, to the other from within. Dr. Caird, the Master of Balliol, puts it in this way, "It was no doubt the weakness of St. Paul, as contrasted with his Master, that he needed to see the spiritual law of life outwardly illustrated in a supernatural vision, ere he could believe in it as a truth of inward experience."[3] But remembering how Paul outstrips every other mental

[1] *Burns*, p. 270.

[2] *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 121; cf. *ibid.* p. 341 f., and the very striking quotations there on the originality of Jesus from Baldensperger, Harnack, and Wellhausen. Professor Corson (*Browning Studies*, p. 57) has the striking saying, "Were it not for this transmission of the quickening power of personality, the New Testament would be to a great extent a dead letter." He is thinking of its place in the lives of the followers of Jesus, but the truth is supremely applicable to the part played by Jesus Himself.

[3] *Evolution of Religion*, ii. 202.

and spiritual genius, and yet stops short, leaving Jesus towering above him, does not this contrast, so well stated, amount to this: that Jesus Himself is what He claims to be, "the Truth"? What others acquire, He is. And that is why we can never rest satisfied with any estimate of Jesus that treats Him simply as a teacher. He is that, because He is so much more, more than thinker, or even seer, Ruskin's premier rank of master-minds.[1] He is Himself a Revelation. Look at His calm assumption of superiority and power: "Verily, verily, I say unto you"; "Learn of Me"; "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." The explanation of this which He offers is His filial relationship to God. He attributes all His knowledge of God and power to reveal Him to the fact, that He knew God as His own Father: "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father . . . and no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and He to whom the Son will reveal Him." If there is anything beyond His ken, it is because the Father has kept it in His own hand. These short but significant references to the subject of the source of His knowledge and power in the Synoptics prepare us for the full explanation of the points in John. Three times over, with more or less fulness, this subject was discussed. First of all, it was with Nicodemus (chap. iii.). There He asserts His capacity to teach heavenly things on the ground of His heavenly origin and His constant communion with heaven. And John's review of the situation—or is it John the Baptist's?—at the close of the chapter confirms this as the meaning which it carried to His disciples, for it explains His ability to speak the word of God by His unstinted endowment with the Spirit by God the Father Himself. The second occasion was on one day at the last Feast of Tabernacles, and the third on the day following. First it was in reply to the question,

[1] *Modern Painters*, iii. pt. iv. chap. xvi. §§ 28, 29.

"How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" The question reached His ears, and His answer was perfectly straightforward and explicit: "My teaching is not Mine, but His that sent Me" (vii. 15, 16). The next day the same subject cropped up again, and what is then said, is His justification for claiming to be the Light of the World. His plea is, that His Father is His witness. The Father sent Him, and what He speaks to the world is what He heard from Him, what He was taught by Him, and what He had seen with Him. It was all due to His divine origin and training, due to the immediate response of His heart to the inner testimony of the Spirit of God there (viii. 12 ff.). No wonder men felt that this was a new doctrine. No wonder they could not deny its power, even when they resented its impression. The centurion did not exaggerate the power of Christ's word, when he said, "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed" (Matt. viii. 8). He felt its authority, and could not believe that anything in nature could resist its force.

Christ suggests the very same thing indirectly by the way in which He presented His truth to men. In the main, He did not argue. Neither did He seek to win men by flights of rhetoric. He could indeed speak with impassioned eloquence. Nothing can exceed the genuine eloquence of the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, the Vision of Judgment, the denunciation of Pharisaic hypocrisy, and the pathos of the closing appeal to callous, unrelenting Jerusalem. He could argue with resistless logic, when need was, parry question with question, use with telling effect the *argumentum ad hominem*, or leave His opponent helplessly transfixed on the horns of a hopeless dilemma. But that was not the method He spontaneously adopted.[1] He sowed the seeds of truth in

[1] For an interesting note in this connection, see Dr. John Ker's *Thoughts for Heart ana Life*, p. 212 ff.

suggestive story and proverb. He presented it in its native beauty, fresh from the hand of God, needing no backing with quotation of great names. His appeals were personal. He sought to convince His hearers, never to compel them; to make them feel the responsibility of dealing with the truth, and the duty of testing all He said by the one supreme test of honest experiment. "If any man is willing to do God's will, he shall know of My teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself" (John vii. 17). His supreme anxiety was to reach men's consciences. He knew how truth worked there. He knew that men revealed themselves by their response to the light, which, like a magnet, draws all scattered rays to itself, and if anything is repelled, it is because of its alien nature. When men refused His message, He knew the secret was in their own wicked hearts. "Because I tell you the truth, therefore ye believe Me not" (John viii. 45). He was never content with men whose faith rested only on externals. Miracles were arresting. He knew their value. They had an instructive, demonstrative force which He fully appreciated. And in certain circumstances, it was as natural for Him, possessing the power, to work a miracle, as for any other man to speak a word of comfort, offer a prayer, or give an alms. But for evidence, it was of secondary value even for Him. He makes that plain, from His words to Philip, "Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works' sake" (John xiv. 11). What is all this but most striking testimony to His own conviction as to the absolute truth of all He was teaching? It had only to be stated in order to prove itself. Let Him leave it in the world, uttered by His lips, and it was bound to assert itself. Nothing could quench it. It was spirit, life, life-giving.

III. This brings us to the question of the method Jesus adopted to present this truth. Without attempting

to record all the features of Christ's method, there are three which are of fundamental importance to our subject, and which may be stated somewhat fully. They are these—Repetition, Accommodation, and Progress.

i. Repetition. The repetition to which I refer is not simply that perfectly obvious type of it, which is found in the pairs of illustrative parables, like the Leaven and the Mustard Seed, the Pearl of Great Price and the Treasure hid in the Field. I refer to the type that is to be found in great blocks, those presentations in similar terms of similar truths and didactic events, given by different evangelists as occurring at different times. These have been the despair of harmonists and the happy hunting ground of critics. It is the fashion to decry harmonists. It is the habit of critics to regard all seeming repetition of similar events and sayings as inventions, due not to wilful perversion, but to mistake and ignorance. Where the harmonists have given themselves away is in their excessive readiness to assent to the improbability of repetitions. They thus are often reduced to grotesque shifts to overcome discrepancies between competing accounts of what they must regard as one occurrence. How easy it is to exaggerate the improbability of repetition, say, of the delivery of large portions of the Sermon on the Mount, or of the feeding of thousands with a few loaves, has been very strikingly illustrated by a parallel, to which attention has been called in this connection, in the present day. In the recent Spanish-American war, two Spanish fleets were destroyed by two American fleets, the one at Santiago in the West Indies, the other, at the other side of the world, in Manila Bay, in the Philippines, under these extraordinary conditions that, in the one case, no life was lost on the American side, and in the other, only one. Were that as ancient history as our New Testament, we should be told that it was so improbable, that one of these, if not both, must be a myth, a meaning-

less repetition for the glory of the Americans. And yet it is sober fact. And a careful study of the chronology and spheres of activity of the life and teaching of Jesus suggests that similarly repetition is to be looked for, exists, and is the explanation of varying accounts.

The course of the life of Christ, as given in the four Gospels, includes (1) public ministry in Judæa and Jerusalem (John), (2) a similar ministry in Galilee, both west and east of the Sea of Gennesaret (all the Synoptics), and (3) still another, east and west of Jordan, south of the Sea of Galilee (Luke); that is to say, three distinct spheres of activity. That lies on the face of things. Examine more closely, and this comes out. Each of these is worked by Jesus on the plan of extended and repeated itinerancies, partly travelling over again ground already broken, watering seed sown or gathering a harvest, and partly breaking up new ground, just as Paul, His apostle, did in his missionary journeys, taking his cue from his Master. If this is so, what can be more probable in itself than that we should find Jesus called upon, by the recurrence of the great common ills of humanity, to repeat cures of blindness, palsy, and leprosy? Who would be surprised to find two very similar cases in a physician's diary? Is it incredible that, to new audiences, in new districts, He should repeat the fundamental truths which He had come into the world to declare, and that even in very similar terms? The improbability is that He should do anything else. Does a teacher never repeat himself to a new class of students? Does a preacher never redeliver former discourses when in a new charge, nor an evangelist, when he visits a fresh district, give again a whole set of telling addresses on the essentials of salvation, with just such slight variations as a new centre of work demands? And Jesus was an evangelist, come to tell the Good News. Is it to be said, then, that there must be some mistake somewhere, when Luke

makes Him say in Peræa what Matthew tells us He ha already said in Galilee? Is not the true explanation tha He said the same thing twice over, and probably man another time, of which there is no separate record? Wha proves it is the case of the Sermon on the Mount.[1] Wha Matthew gives as a whole, delivered on a single occasio Luke reproduces in two sections. The one of these is summary of the whole, beginning where Matthew begin ending where he ends, and referred to the same period Galilæan ministry as that in which Matthew locates (Luke vi. 20–49). The other embodies much that omitted from the earlier summary, and which Luke r presents as now given in new combination and order, n in Galilee, but in Judæa, in Jerusalem,[2] and less as a pr

[1] The patchwork theory of the Sermon on the Mount has really nothing say for itself except inveterate prejudice against the possibility of the retention the memory of a discourse of such length. But there have been discourses ordinary men so vivid and arresting that they have lived for a lifetime in t minds of some of their hearers. Is it impossible that a discourse like this fr Christ, that went to the shaping of Matthew's whole after-life, should have ma an indelible impression on his mind, or at least have lived there till it w reduced to writing?

[2] Attention to marks of place and time and to association of ideas makes evident that much of the teaching recorded in Luke ix. 51–xviii. 34 w delivered in Jerusalem (Luke x. 38–xiii. 9) at the same time as what is record in John ix. and x. Thus Luke x. 38–xiii. 9 apparently all belonged to a ti when Jesus was in the vicinity of the home of Martha and Mary, which w Bethany (John xi. 1), a common habitat of Jesus when visiting Jerusale At the close of the day's discussion given in Luke xiii. 1–6, the subject un discussion is the connection between tragic events and the character of victims. The reply given then still left room for further inquiry as to relation between suffering and sin, and if John ix. describes the events of following day, we have the key to the inquiry as to the cause of the affliction the man blind from his birth narrated there. This man was sent to the Pool Siloam to complete his cure. What suggested that pool rather than, s Bethesda, at this juncture? Jesus was anxious to call attention to this cu He wished it completed where many would witness it. Siloam, for the ti enjoyed special notoriety owing to the accident recorded in Luke xiii. 1 evidently recent and fresh in men's memories, and vastly increasing the thr that ordinarily frequented it. How natural to send the man there! But again brings John ix. and x. into close touch with Luke x. 38–xiii. 9, and inference is all the more justifiable as these are the only two occasions on wh this pool is mentioned.

nme to novices than as an encouragement to disciples. observe, as a single indication of this, the characteristic elty in this repetition within sight of His end and after prediction of His death, "Fear not, little flock; for it your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" ke xii. 22–40).[1]

Another striking repetition is to be found in Christ's posal of those who attributed His miraculous powers to lzebub. It was a piece of self-vindication, and it had be done twice. Very early in His ministry, as Mark s us, the Pharisees, with the formalist's suspicion of new gious movements that have the appearance of earnest-s, had sent a deputation to Galilee to watch His work give their verdict on it. On its return, it spread the ort that Jesus cast out demons, but it was by Beelzebub; that when He was asked for a sign from heaven, He declined the test. Nothing was said of His effectual posure of the absurdity of this explanation of His cures, of the very trenchant reason He had given for refusing submit to their test (Mark iii. 22–30; cf. Matt. xii. -45). So their explanation gained currency in Jeru-em. Every savant felt primed with a crushing exposure, Jesus ever dared show His face in Jerusalem again attempt a cure there. In process of time He did ne to Jerusalem, and cast out a dumb devil. Luke ntions the cure in a sentence just to introduce the out-st of Pharisaic spleen, for which it was the signal ke xi. 14–36). The old canard is revived, "He casteth demons by Beelzebub, the Prince of the demons." at is Christ's reply? The old reply. He had used it h shattering effect in Galilee, and with it had sent His ailants, like jackals, packing from His track. And it not difficult to imagine the crestfallen look of His ractors, especially those of them who may have been

[1] Cf. Gore, *Sermon on the Mount*, p. 9 ff.

among the deputation to Galilee, when they see Him draw and wield the old sword, repeat the old argument, which before had compelled them to retreat amid the contempt of the multitude. Jesus leaves them again transfixed, first, on the one pale, and then on the other, of a double dilemma. "If Satan is divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? . . . If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? . . . But if I, by the finger of God, cast out devils, then is the kingdom of God come upon you." Then He goes on to the demand for a sign, and as before, dragging to the light the spirit of the age that demanded it, shows how unworthy it was of any response, how incapable they were of understanding any sign.

Instances of repetition with slight variation could easily be multiplied, such as the parable of the Pounds (Luke xix. 12–27) and the parable of the Talents (Matt. xxv. 14–30), variations on each other, to teach different aspects of the same truth;[1] the parable of the Lost Sheep in Luke (xv. 3–7), and the parable of the Good Shepherd in John (x. 11–15); the lament over Jerusalem in Matthew (xxiii. 37–39), and the similar lament at an earlier hour as given in Luke (xix. 41–44). But it is not necessary. Enough has been said to show that Christ saw the value, and recognised the necessity of repeating and restating, in similar terms, fundamental truths as to His Work and Person. He taught men in His own time, as God taught by Isaiah in stubborn Jerusalem, "line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little" (Isa. xxviii. 13).

And the apostles followed their Master. How the earlier chapters of the Acts reiterate the facts, and their significance, of the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ! How Luke repeats there the story of Paul's con-

[1] See Bruce's *Parabolic Teaching of Christ, in loco.*

version! And his repetition of it is due to the fact that he has two speeches of Paul to report, and these show how ready Paul himself was to repeat the story. A glance at Paul's Epistles makes evident how constantly he came over again to each new Church the familiar story of the saving facts of Christ's life and death. The Galatians had Jesus Christ, as it were, placarded [1] before their eyes, crucified (Gal. iii. 1). 1 Cor. xv. 1–5 tells of the same things displayed to the Corinthians. How he repeats the facts of the return of Christ! And Romans repeats the argument of Galatians, for a different purpose, against the power of the law to save, while Ephesians and Colossians give Christ the same place, but only that in the one there may be deduced from it the unity of the Church, and in the other the all-sufficiency of Christ alone. John sits down to write a new commandment, but it is just the old "love one another." Paul, with an old man's confidentialness, tells his dear Philippians why he dares thus to repeat himself: "To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, and for you it is safe" (iii. 2). And the Church of Christ has been graciously guided to the same conclusion when she has preserved four records of the Saviour's life, that tell over and over again the same story of the life and death and rising again of the Son of God. Repetition is of the essence of New Testament method. "Every scribe, which is instructed unto the kingdom of God, . . . bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old" (Matt. xiii. 52). But the repetition is with that strain of variety, begotten of new surroundings, which shows that neither Christ nor His apostles were mere phrase-makers, or bound to a single set of terms.

ii. This leads up to the second feature to be noted of Christ's method of teaching, namely, Accommodation.

That Christ should have deliberately set Himself to

[1] Προεγράφη.

accommodate the presentation of His teaching to the mental capacity and the conditions of time, place, and circumstance of His hearers, is only what was to be expected in one who claimed that in Him the prophecy of Isa. lxi. 1 was fulfilled. It was a definite principle with Him. Indeed, it might be said to be the very principle which lay at the root of the form of His revelation of God. His incarnation was a divine provision for presenting God to men in terms of their own human nature; in the terms, that is to say, in which alone they could really know Him. Anthropomorphism, when the true μορφή of ἄνθρωπος, namely, man's spiritual, and not his physical, side is kept in view, is neither derogatory to God, nor misleading as to His nature, but is a necessary contributory to a conception of God, which will be intelligible to men. Dr. William Robertson puts the principle quaintly in his charming lecture on "German Student Life."[1] "Explain to me Hegelianism, Hermann." "You could not understand it, Louisa." "Nay, say rather that you are not able to explain it; for it seems to me that what one understands himself, he ought to be able to explain to another." "Yes, to one who can also understand; I could not explain it, for instance, to a crow!" "No, but one crow could explain it to another crow, if he understood it himself. They seem to understand each other's cawing, when their college meets in the ploughed fields." And the Incarnation of Christ was God's marvellous accommodation of His revelation of Himself to the petty conditions of our powers of comprehension. Christ embodies it. He became Man, to explain God to man. "The Word was God . . . and the Word was made flesh," and then men understood it. It does not surprise us, therefore, to find Christ taking pains to get into touch with His audience, and to put things in the way that will arrest their attention and gain their assent.

[1] *Martin Luther, German Student Life, Poetry*, p. 129.

Accommodation was a settled principle of His life. It xplained His conformity to many of the rites and customs f the Jewish faith and of the religious world of the day, Iis payment, for instance, of the Temple-tax, and His sub- nitting to John's baptism. It explains, just as effectively, Iis setting aside of many conventionalities, and ignoring f many contemporary prejudices and distinctions. It xplains His acceptance of current beliefs without criti- ism, which were not strictly accurate, but which could ot have been corrected without leading Him far from the nain purpose of His mission, and whose acceptance in no ay prejudiced its truth. It was this principle that made Iim practically limit His own mission to Israel, and, at ne same time, clearly contemplate, and prepare His dis- iples for, the world mission of His good news. It is what es at the heart of His explanation to His disciples of His ubstitution of parable for direct address. Direct address ad served its purpose. His audiences were prone to read neir worldly ideas into the terms He used, to cling to the ld notions they were wont to associate with the words, in vhich He was perforce compelled to embody the grander piritual facts He had come to reveal. And yet Jesus had ot said all He wished to say. Some understood the inner neaning of His teaching, and He must carry it farther still. And to meet the situation He betook Himself to the arable, fascinating in its form, carrying a meaning on its eeve, but clothing a living truth yet more significant for nose who could understand. This principle has something o do with the gradual transition in point of prominence in ne teaching from "the kingdom" to "the Christ," from the kingdom of God" to "My kingdom." No stronger orrective could be found for the mistaken views men were nerishing of the character of the kingdom, than the laying f emphasis on the fact, that He, the lowly poor man, was, ven as such, its proper representative on earth. Pilate

speedily understood that at least, when he interrogate Jesus as to His kingship and kingdom. And the sam is true of other transitions. The same principle of accom modation explains the differing treatment of a Nicodemu and a Samaritan woman, or of the three candidates fo discipleship. It accounts for His marvellous accessibilit to the outcast classes, is impressively displayed in Hi ability to conciliate and elevate them, while He is perfectl outspoken in condemnation of their sins.

But perhaps the most striking illustration of it is i the variety of His treatment of His most bitter opponent the Pharisees. Victims as they were, in so many case of the fatal canker in their system of religion,—namely formalism, issuing in self-righteousness and hypocrisy,— and quick as He was to denounce this most pernicious o all vices, yet Jesus indulged in no indiscriminate condemna tion, and only broke out in terms of severity when kindlie methods failed. The contrast of two occasions, when H was invited to dine at the house of a Pharisee, illustrate this. The first occasion followed immediately on tha humiliating defeat He had inflicted on them in thei attempt to discredit His miraculous power and His righ to teach, to which we have just referred (Luke xi. 37–54) At first sight it seems almost incredible that one of tha very class should at once have invited Him to lunch. Doe it not seem like a generous returning of good for evil o overture for peace, indicative of a better spirit in them than Jesus gave them credit for? Is it not a little sur prising to find Jesus accept the invitation, after the wa in which He had just spoken? But no sooner is the hous reached than this impression is dissipated, and the tru spirit of the invitation is revealed. There was nothing gener ous or hospitable about it. It was a device, partly to cu short the scathing exposure, partly to surround Him wit hostile critics; and scarcely has He entered the door when

st by looks and then by words, this becomes evident, and
sus rises in indignation and leaves the house, apparently
thout ever breaking bread in it. And the intensity of
is feeling is unmistakably shown in the terrible terms
which He immediately resumes His warnings to the
ople against the soul-destructive influence of Pharisaic
aching. All He could utter in that Pharisee's house
ere words of direct reproof of their hypocrisy and de-
ption. After such an experience at their hands—and
was not solitary—what are we to think when not long
ter that, we find Him again at dinner in another Pharisee's
use? (Luke xiv. 1–24). There is a plot against Him
re too. But Jesus this time will not take offence. With
kindly humour He disarms every element of opposition.
e heals the palsied man in front of Him, Sabbath day
ough it was; but He puts it to His fellow-guests that,
art from the *odium theologicum*, there was not one of
em but would do as much, if they could, for a fellow-man,
d actually did it every Sabbath for his ox or for his ass.
ow did He manage, without intrusiveness, and without
ovoking resentment or retort, to give next a lesson in
mility to fellow-guests choosing the best seats for them-
lves, or to advise His host as to the guests he should
vite? By playful reference to His own experience, and
happy allusion to their Scriptures (Prov. xxv. 27). For
ho of that company but Jesus would of His own accord
ke the lowest seat at that table? Who be asked by His
st to come up higher? His reproof is an apology to the
an, whom at the host's bidding he had perforce to dis-
ace. What had His host done but invite the poor, when
invited Him? His advice is a delicate compliment.
hat but an ironic reproof to the pious cant of a retailer
religious commonplaces, "Blessed are they that shall
t bread in the kingdom of God," is His story of invita-
ns declined? The whole conversation is a masterpiece of

genial, conciliatory humour, by which Jesus, for the sake of His host, in whom, Pharisee though he was, He had discerned some good thing, disarmed the prejudices of a table of guests, and succeeded in gaining a hearing for some wholesome lessons to men, who usually would brook no word from Him. It shows Jesus a past master in the art—

> "Happily to steer
> From grave to gay, from lively to severe,
> Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,
> Intent to reason, or polite to please."[1]

This illustration of His capacity to throw Himself into the spirit of the situation, and say just the right thing at the right time, finds scores of parallels. Indeed, the words of Jesus are never fully understood, unless read in their setting. It is forgetfulness of this principle that allows a writer like Tolstoy, to run into extreme positions as to the teaching of Jesus on the ground of a single utterance, taken out of its context, and unmodified by other statements on the same subject. It is this that explains why the rule for the rich young ruler, "Sell all that thou hast," is not to be interpreted, with Francis of Assisi, as a law of universal poverty. He had to give up riches, because riches was the one thing that came between him and eternal life. Nothing else save facing proverty with God alone to depend on was a test of faith for him. But the ties of home or the delights of study mean far more to another man, and that is what he may have to sacrifice for Christ. Accommodation explains the statement in each case. It was part of Christ's method of teaching.

This was well understood by His apostles, and followed by them. Paul puts it forward at length as being a ruling principle with him. "Though I was free from all men, I brought myself under bondage to all, that I might gain the more. And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I

[1] Pope, *Essay on Man*, iv. 379.

might gain Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, not being myself under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, not being without law to God, but under law to Christ, that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak. I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some" (1 Cor. ix. 19–22). In the face of this elaborate statement, what excuse has any writer for finding incompatible discrepancies between the Paul of the Acts who circumcises Timothy, and the Paul of Galatians who will not circumcise Titus; the Paul of the Acts who conforms to a Jewish vow at Cenchreæ and Jerusalem, and the Paul of the Epistles who through the law is dead to the law? The Epistles themselves bristle with examples of Paul's suiting of his teaching to the audience he addressed, and contain many a specimen of how the rule acts in the application of great principles. Again we may appeal to the four stories of the life of Christ, as evidence of the sense of the early teachers that they must so set the story as to make it intelligible to various classes of readers. And what is the enigmatic terminology of the Apocalypse adopted for, but just to veil the meaning from unfriendly eyes, and convey it to those who could quite understand? The use of accommodation by the Master and His followers shows how truly they were possessed of common sense; explains why they are generally so intelligible to men of ordinary common sense, who often cannot understand the difficulties discovered by doctrinaire exponents and library students; tells how well they appreciated Christ's counsel, "Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

iii. There remains to notice the third and most important principle of all, namely, Progressive Unfolding of the Truth.

This method, of course, was so far inevitable. Christ could not expect intelligent appreciation and acceptance for the profoundest parts of His teaching, unless and until He gradually prepared men for them, by carrying them on by easy stages, commencing with what was simple, obvious, and familiar. But more is meant than that, when we speak of this method of Christ. There are points in the teaching of Christ at which it undergoes far-reaching transformations. Patient study of His life, comparing Gospel with Gospel, enables us to reach a fairly accurate idea of its course. Doubt may remain—though there is but little—as to the duration of the public ministry, but practically none as to the main sequence of events and utterances. And when this is observed, it is seen that in the earlier part of Christ's teaching the keyword is the Kingdom of God. He speaks, first of all, of its impending advent and its true character in perfectly plain terms. Then comes a series of dissolving views in the parables of the Kingdom, intended to suggest its pre-eminently spiritual character, and dispel the materialistic view men were prone to attribute to it. Then kingdom becomes a comparatively rare term, except in private intercourse with His disciples, or where He is breaking new ground, or as used with reference to a kingdom in which He is the King and Judge. In its place is found teaching about Himself. With an elevated self-assertion which is begotten of the truest modesty, Jesus, not so much in direct words as by acts and manner, so presents Himself to the minds of His disciples, that they are convinced that He is none other than the Christ, and even outsiders are induced to ask, "Can it be that the rulers indeed know that this is the Christ?" (John vii. 26). When once His disciples have realised that fact, He initiates them into the inevitable issue of His career—the Crucifixion. That proves a lesson beyond their capacity, not so much, however, because of

its utter impossibility, as because He had to follow the announcement with the prediction of His certain Resurrection, the assertion of its value for the establishment of His kingdom, and the dazzling prospect of the kingdom coming in all its splendour with Him upon the throne as King and Judge. The apocalyptic pictures crowd the closing pages of Matthew's Gospel, just as the parables do its middle, and the sermon on the kingdom its opening. There is general agreement about these main features of the order of the teaching of Christ. It is most clearly seen in the training of the Twelve, the private teaching; but its counterpart is also plain in the public ministry.

This progressive presentation is attributed in some quarters, however, not to deliberate method, but to development in Christ's own thought as to His mission. Only gradually, it is said, did He realise that He was to be King of the kingdom He preached. Only in the knowledge of deepening deadly hostility was He forced to the conclusion that death must be His end, and only then did He set Himself to weave it into the scheme of His mission and see how it could be made to serve His ends. His prediction of glory, on the other hand, was a bold attempt to discount by anticipation the damaging effect which He foresaw His death would otherwise produce, and so to carry His disciples unshaken through the shock of the crisis. There are many, to be sure, who discern a development in Christ's own ideas, but at the same time hold far too exalted views of His Person to suspect Him of the knavery implied in the last sentence. They regard our Saviour as indeed God's Son, come to proclaim and accomplish salvation for man; but they think that He only gradually, after the commencement of His public ministry, became aware of His own dignity, and that then He was mainly guided by circumstances as to the way in which His mission was to be accomplished and

completed. At the outset He had no definite plan. It was an evolution in His own experience, and hence the progressive element in the teaching.[1]

We are only concerned with this question here in so far as the evidence of the course of the teaching bears upon it. It is most probable—indeed, if Jesus as an infant and child really grew in wisdom, as the Gospels say, it is inconceivable how it could have been otherwise—that during His youth and early manhood Jesus did only gradually arrive at the knowledge of His own Person and mission. But was that completed, or still only in progress, when He undertook His mission, and His ministry began? Was it only at the Baptism He realised that He was Messiah; only after Cæsarea Philippi He knew He must be crucified? There are several things to help us to learn Christ's own mind upon the question. We are dependent, of course, on our evangelists; but when we look at their writings, we do not get a hint of any uncertainty at so late a date. They certainly show us the progress we have noted in His teaching. But (*a*) they present Him to us as a master, who knew from the first what He had to teach, its constituents, its sum, its beginning, middle, and end. They are not supremely anxious about the order of presentation. That is only made out by observant study of their records. It seems to them a matter of comparatively small account. They are anxious about the combined impression, the idea as a whole, which Jesus made and left upon their minds. (*b*) They record sayings, some of them very early, which they did not understand at the time, about which, perhaps,

[1] Dr. Horton (*The Teaching of Jesus*, chap. "The Means of Salvation") is a most reverent representative of the latter class. But here is a striking admission, p. 111: "Jesus never had to retract or even to modify what He said. . . . What He employed at the beginning as the means of salvation remains permanently valid, though if it had remained alone, it would have been ineffectual." Surely this fact of itself implies a well-considered scheme of teaching, and also bids us look for Christ's original view on any subject, not in His initial statement of it, but in its complete form.

they took up false impressions. And it is suggestive of their honesty of heart, that they append notes to them of their first misunderstandings and later intelligent grip. Is it not simply to throw away a valuable key to Christ's mind and thought when we refuse to accept these explanations, prefer as the true meaning the early mistake to the later view in the light of the whole? Is it not the very intention of the notes to suggest, that much that was perfectly understood by Christ Himself at the first was only gradually explained to, and understood by, His disciples? (*c*) Luke's Gospel furnishes striking evidences of this in another way. In the course of the teaching of the first nine chapters, Jesus has gradually brought His disciples to the recognition of Him as the Messiah, reached a point with them far beyond the initial preaching of the kingdom of God. But here begins Luke's section, peculiar to himself, of the great journey to Jerusalem, largely through lands where Jesus had not appeared before. And what does Jesus teach here? In public He goes back to the earlier Galilæan teaching, recommencing at the simpler kingdom stage, and once more bringing His hearers, by degrees, to Himself as King. But in private, with His disciples alone, He proceeds without a break to the secret of the Cross. Does not this bear out the view, that progressive statement was a method selected because of the limited, but gradually improving, capacity of hearers, and was not due to want of knowledge at the outset on the part of the teacher? It will not do to say, for instance, as one writer does,[1] "Jesus had to discover . . . that a pitiless foe was in possession of this world . . . whom He would have to overcome in the stern grapple of death," and quote in proof Mark iii. 27, Matt. xii. 29, and Luke xi. 29 (the reference to overpowering the strong man before seizing his goods), as if these all referred to one stage, and that at

[1] Horton, *The Teaching of Jesus*, p. 116.

a date subsequent to the parable of the Sower, and as if that parable marked a point prior to which Jesus regarded Himself as little more than a teacher, and His words the means of salvation apart from any personal operations of His own. That is to forget that Mark iii. 27, Matt. xii. 29 refer to a period long prior to Luke xi. 29, and also prior to the parable of the Sower itself. There is here one of Christ's repetitions, and therefore the passages appealed to, when viewed thus apart, discredit the idea of the advance in Christ's own thought, which they are quoted to support. (*d*) But not only so; take the great Sermon on the Mount itself, which both Matthew and Luke place very early in the teaching. What is it, on the one hand, but a sermon on the text—an illustration of the way in which Jesus preached on it—"The kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the Good News." On the other hand, you find there in germ the great body of Christ's gradually unfolded message, and that, too, progressively presented. It begins with the blessings of the kingdom of heaven. It explains its righteousness. But before the sermon has gone far, Jesus is seen exercising an authority within it that is supreme. If God is presented as the heavenly Father, and He as their pattern, their confidence, and their reward, the sermon does not close in either Matthew or Luke without the most urgent appeal to the consciences of men in view of the day, when they must appear before a judgment-seat, where their eternal fate will be declared. But who sits to judge? It is the Speaker Himself. "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord . . . and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." It is the anticipatory note for the judgment-scene of the closing speech of the last great day of the public teaching, that solemn summons of the world He came to save, to appear before His bar; but it is struck at an early day of the ministry. A gradual unfolding

there undoubtedly is; but it is not due to a process which took place in the mind of Christ after the commencement of His ministry. It is only in the presentation of the truth by Him, who knew it all from the first, to the gradually opening minds of His disciples. It is a method of teaching deliberately adopted, not a necessity imposed by original limitation of view.

This method of their Master was well understood by His followers, and pursued by them in their presentation of the truth. Paul expressly says so, and so does the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In his First Epistle to the Corinthians, after telling them (chap. ii.) of the wonderful wealth of spiritual knowledge within the reach of the spiritual man, Paul (chap. iii.) rallies the members of that Church because of their lack of spiritual capacity. Because of it he had been compelled to treat them as babes, feed them with milk and not with meat, for they were not able to follow him, if he sought to carry them farther into the depth of divine truth in Christ. In Hebrews the same complaint is met with (v. 11–vi. 3). Those, who by reason of the time should have themselves been teachers, still had need of someone to teach them the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God. And with this remonstrance the writer summons them to follow him in an advance. "Let us cease to speak of the first principles of Christ, and press on unto perfection (full growth); not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the teaching of baptisms and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead and of eternal judgment." Both of these explicit statements make it perfectly plain, that it was the habit of the Christian teachers to start with a very simple presentation of the truth, and carry their adherents forward to a fuller and fuller understanding of its wealth and range. With most of these teachers there is not material enough left for

us to show from their writings or sayings the process actually at work. But something of it has already been indicated in what was said in the first chapter on the significance of the order in which the books of the New Testament appeared. And, indeed, it is scarcely necessary to elaborate this point, as the real necessity for an inquiry, such as is undertaken in this volume, into the relation of the apostolic teaching to the teaching of Jesus is just to determine, whether the advance of thought with regard to the nature and essence of the Person and Work of Christ, which is generally recognised in the apostolic teaching, is a legitimate development of the teaching laid down in germ and outline by Jesus Himself. My contention is, that it is legitimate. With orderly progress in the presentation of His message on the part of Christ Himself, it is only natural to find, that what He had begun should be carried still further, if that were possible, by His qualified and accredited followers. Indeed, as a guide to the vital points on which it is right to invite and prosecute comparison, and to the order in which they should be approached, I shall follow what I have already indicated was the line of progress within Christ's own teaching — Kingdom, Christ, Cross, Throne. And one is the more readily induced to do this, because along this line those subjects come first on which there is most obvious agreement, and then those upon which there is apparently more or less variation or deviation from the original type.

CHAPTER IV

The Common Assumption

Christ's Mission—The Need for Incarnation apart from Redemption a purely speculative Question—Sinners, not the Cosmos, Christ's primary Object—Salvation the widest common Conception—Seen in prevailing joyous Spirit—It is Gospel—Illustrated in Narratives of Christ's Birth, in His own Manifesto at Nazareth, and in His Apologies for His Methods—It is preserved in His Followers, Peter, Paul, John.

Man's Need of Salvation—(1) Man, thought of as the Old Testament thought—Paul's Analysis in 1 Cor. ii. 11–15 ethical—Constitution of Man, personality, purpose, the perfect Specimen — Spiritual Life supreme—Solidarity of the Race—Individual Responsibility—Immortality—Likeness to God, Life's ideal Perfection; to be attained through Discipline—Value of this Life to God—(2) Sin—Old Testament—Difference between Qualfications of Master and of School for treating this Subject—Common Vocabulary—Both chiefly interested in cure of Sin—Regard Sin as a single Root of Evil in Man's Heart—Nature of Sin, Disobedience to God's Will, Refusal to believe in Christ—Combination of Factors—Origin of Sin—The Devil, other Tempters, Lust of human Heart—Is Flesh inherently sinful? — Christ — Paul — Adam's Sin — Sin's Results — Irretrievable Stage—Is Escape possible? — Is Christ's Teaching auto-soteric, Paul's hetero-soteric?

God—Christ is God-sent—Christ, the supreme Christian Argument for God—Relation of Christian Conception to Jewish and Gentile—What is new in it?—The Wrath of God—Is Christ at one with Paul and John?—Christ's Real Attitude—God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—Meaning of Phrase—What "Father" implies on Christ's Lips — Figurative Element in Term—Equivalent to Love, Grace—What fatherly Love is.

The intended Range of Salvation—Do James and Peter differ from Paul? —Do Acts and Galatians disagree?—Does Paul differ from Jesus? —What Christ's Words imply—What they declare—Vagary of Criticism—Is John at Issue with Christ and Paul?—Conclusion.

It was the merit of the Reformation that it recalled Christendom to the real object of the Mission of Christ. If its

view of that mission was still too individualistic, and modern teachers strike a true note when they insist that Jesus aimed at a redeemed community, yet that is only an extension of the terms, and salvation by grace remains the focal point of the various types of New Testament teaching. In virtue of His appearance in the world, Jesus and His apostles felt themselves entitled to proclaim Good News, *the* Good News, and the substance of the Good News was—Salvation. This was expressed in a great variety of ways, emphasising different aspects of the glorious result. In the endeavour of exponents to do justice to the individuality of each of the teachers there is a risk that the common centre be forgotten. But, if this be done, it is to conduct the chorus without striking the keynote, and to imperil the harmony. At the very outset, therefore, it is imperative to observe that amid diversity of presentation there is this common assumption, that in Christ there has appeared a Saviour. He came on a mission to save men, a mission necessitated by the ravages of sin, undertaken at the instance of God Himself, and intended to embrace all mankind.

There are, indeed, those who hold that the Incarnation would have taken place, even if there had been no call for a mission of redemption.[1] But a question is raised there which lies quite outside the range of the teaching of Christ and His apostles, and within the domain of speculative theology, and therefore outside the range of our studies. As far as Christ's own words and those of His apostles go, His appearance in human flesh was due to the task He had undertaken. And His accomplishment of it was the substance of the Good News they had to proclaim.

It is true, too, that the work of Christ is also represented

[1] For a recent able advocacy of this view and comparison along this line of the Christological positions of Paul, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and John, see Edwards' *The God-Man*, Lects. II. and III.

by Paul as having a cosmic significance. And this is no late growth, peculiar to Epistles like Colossians and Ephesians. It is found in 1 Corinthians. And the key to all his thought about it is in Romans. In chap. viii. of that Epistle we get the proper point from which to understand the apostle's mind. The temptation in the present day is to regard this cosmic range as the sublimest aspect of Christ's work. Since the helio-centric system of the planets displaced the geo-centric, we have been more and more frequently reminded that man must learn his own insignificance. He is a mere speck on a tiny fragment of the universe. And it is absurd to attribute to him the importance attached to him by the Christian religion. In a scare at this verdict appeal has sometimes been made, by apologists, to Paul's presentation of the place and work of Christ, and the plea urged, that there the saving work of Christ is regarded simply as an adjunct of a far larger world-embracing function, which Christ had to fulfil. Now Paul did regard Christ as the active agent of the Deity in all His relations with created things, and so did John. And it was as such that Paul attributed to Him the work of rescuing man, if rescue there was to be. But with that instinct of the Jew, which is true to the native dignity of man as equipped with mind and heart and will, which no helio-centric theory can affect, so long as men retain their common sense and do not allow themselves to be gulled into believing that bulk and density count for more than intelligence and love, Paul, having laid hold on Christ, keeps things in their true relation. His system of the world is neither geo- nor helio-centric, but Christo-centric, not material but spiritual. Starting from this he sees all other results of Christ's work as subsidiary to that which He effects for those made in His own image, whom, as Hebrews tells us, "He is not ashamed to call His brethren." And if the whole creation does benefit by the work of Christ, it is still only as a sequel and corollary

to the benefit obtained by mankind. "The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 19, cf. 20–24), just as "the new heavens and the new earth" of the Apocalypse are for redeemed humanity. And unless we note this, and the need which it was intended by Christ and understood by His apostles to meet, we shall be launched on the field of study without taking account of the common postulates as to the nature and need of man and the character of God, which are essential to an understanding of the relation of separate views.

The legitimacy of this view of the widest common conception of the New Testament rests not simply on an appeal to language. It is supported by the spirit of the whole. The terms in which the whole body of teachers, Master and subordinates alike, prefer to speak of their teaching, are those of joyfulness. It was no shallow optimism that begat this spirit. It was accompanied by appalling knowledge of the depths of human depravity. But the issue was not despair. And neither the most poignant anxiety over the perils of the unregenerate nor youthful dismay at the prevalence of evil must be allowed so to dominate the minds of the followers of Christ in later days, as to make them lose the hopeful tone of Christ and His first disciples, relapse to the stage of John the Baptist, and take him for their model rather than Jesus. "He that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." The Christian message is Gospel, Good News, Glad Tidings. Here, as in so many other cases,[1] words were appropriated, and virtually acquired a new meaning, from the day Christ began to preach and to use them. *Εὐαγγέλιον* had its meaning changed to serve the purposes of Christianity, and *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι* (= to evangelise, to tell good news) was restricted to the telling of the news brought by Christ and

[1] Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "Glory," vol. ii. p. 186 *b*.

repeated by His apostles, as if there were in comparison no other good news worth the name. This note of joyfulness, this term Good News, of which the substance is variously "the gospel of the kingdom of God" (Mark i. 14), "the gospel of Jesus Christ" (Mark i. 1), "the gospel of the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 4), "the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts xx. 24), "the gospel of your salvation" (Eph. i. 13), "the gospel of God" (Rom. xv. 16), "the gospel of peace" (Eph. vi. 15), which is so characteristic of the message and so cognate to the idea of salvation that "gospel" becomes a sort of general term for the sum of Christian truth and teaching, bears out what I say, that salvation is of its very essence and inseparable from any true presentation of it. It is as a message of salvation that the teaching of Christ fits most widely into the needs of mankind, and justifies that world-wide range which He contemplated, and His followers sought to secure, for it. It is the point at which it strikes deepest root into the prophecies of Israel, reaches their profoundest truth, and explains their world-embracing terms, which otherwise seem so pretentious and vain, but with which Christ and His followers are so anxious to associate themselves.

Why does Matthew tell us, for instance, that His parents, by divine instruction, gave their child the name hitherto common enough, but which henceforward became sacred to Him alone, Jesus? It is because of the meaning which, in His case, it was to carry with it. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21 ff.).[1] Why does Luke, again, give at length the angelic announcement to the shepherds, and old Simeon's soliloquy when he saw the child? Because they so accurately characterise the mission. "Behold, I bring you *good tidings of great joy*, which shall be to *all people*:

[1] Ἰησοῦς = "salvation"; cf. Ecclus. xlvi. 1; Philo, *Nom. Mutat.* § 21, and explanations there of the name Joshua.

for there is born to you this day, in the city of David, a *Saviour, who is Christ the Lord*" (Luke ii. 10, 11); and Simeon, "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel" (Luke ii. 30–32). To the mind of these evangelists, the mission of Jesus was evidently the fulfilment of the hope, that had been generated by the promises of God in the hearts of the most devout and spiritually-minded in Israel.

The passage with which Jesus Himself prefaced His sermon at Nazareth, a sort of manifesto of His mission quoted from old prophecy (Isa. lxi. 1 ff.), shows that this was precisely His own view (Luke iv. 16 ff.). It is the announcement of the advent of a great deliverance, in the face of which the woes of humanity are put to flight; and this not only among the affluent and noble, but down to the humblest ranks of society. The terms in which the deliverance is described, the context of the passage from which it is taken, the actual state of Israel in the time of Christ, and His refusal to make the slightest move in the direction of a political revolution, show plainly that the deliverance which He was to effect was spiritual in its kind. The later reply to John confirms this: "Go your way, and tell John the things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them"; and Luke notes that at that time Jesus purposely cured many afflicted with various diseases or possessed with evil spirits, in order to provide John's disciples with samples of His work then actually in progress (Matt. xi. 4–6; Luke vii. 21 ff.). This explains one purpose of the miracles. They were signs. The diseases cured were recognised types of spiritual evil. Deafness and blindness were the figures of

fatal indifference to spiritual truth. Leprosy was the type of sin. Demoniac possession pointed to the imperious author of all human ill. And death was the tragic issue. All these are routed by Jesus. The good news that it can be done, is made known even to the poorest. They too may share the blessings as freely as nobleman's child, or centurion's servant, or daughter of a ruler of the synagogue. Rescue, rescue of men from ills in every form, its proclamation by word and act, which alike inspire a great confidence that no human ill can ultimately resist Him—that is Christ's mission. For the cure of disease, He delighted to use the Greek word σώζειν, just because of its double significance; it hinted so much more. For Jesus, Christianity was strictly what Erskine of Linlathen calls it, "a divinely-revealed system of medical treatment for diseased spirits."[1] How the sight of a multitude appealed to Him! (Matt. ix. 36). How He discerned their inward unrest—hunger of mind and soul, distraction through the conflict within—and invited them to His side: "Come, . . . and I will give you rest unto your souls" (Matt. xi. 28). "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink!" (John vii. 37). Or listen to His great apology for His methods in Luke xv., or His claim to have the power to forgive sins (Mark ii. 10). Or observe His wonderful treatment of the woman taken in adultery (John viii. 1 ff.). Or hear the explanation of His mission in the three great related sayings: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mark ii. 17; Matt. ix. 13; Luke v. 32); "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10); "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. xx. 28). These three words go deeper and deeper into the purpose of Christ's mission. It began with a call. It passed into a search. It culminated

[1] *The Freeness of the Gospel*, p. 4.

in a sacrifice of Himself to save the men of whom He was in search, and whom, on reaching, He could save in no other way. The advance from the search to the sacrifice in these Synoptic utterances is like the advance from Luke's parable of the shepherd, seeking the lost sheep and rescuing it (Luke xv. 3–7), to the Good Shepherd of John, who, to save His sheep, lays down His life for them (John x. 11–15). And all these words together are simply expansions of the single sentence in John, "God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him" (John iii. 17). Christ presented His mission as a mission of salvation.

It is impossible to recall the words of the earliest followers of Christ without at once recognising that, however variously they may have stated other points, about this they are agreed with one another and with their Master. Recall a set of characteristic sayings. We meet Peter early in his apostleship at three critical junctures. He takes word in hand to explain to the multitude the significance of Pentecost, and he does it by an appeal to prophecy, which connects the gift of the Spirit with the advent of salvation, and that he associates with Jesus of Nazareth (Acts ii. 21, 22, 36, 38). Again, on his defence before the Sanhedrin with John he boldly refused to be browbeaten into silence. And why cannot he cease to speak of Jesus? "In none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12). And once more, at the great conference at Jerusalem a very serious issue was raised, vital to the existence of the Christian Church. Jews, jealous of the law of Moses, were insisting that Gentiles must conform to that. But Peter insisted that the matter of supreme moment was not the survival of the law of Moses, but the salvation of these men. For that he urges—and James endorses it—they

only needed a living faith in Jesus Christ. But is there not a turn as effective as it is humble, in the way Peter puts it, almost making the Gentile type the pattern and the Jew only his follower? "We believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as they" (Acts xv. 11). These words, spoken each at a critical juncture, are weighty, and reveal his mind. And when you take them along with the whole tenor of his Epistle, which, like that of James, is full of anxious solicitude for the steadfastness of those who have declared their attachment to Christ, lest they imperil their welfare, we feel at once how germane to his thought of Christ is the idea of salvation.

A similar *résumé* of words of Paul shows the same thought predominant in his mind. In the Epistles of his closing days, the Pastoral Epistles, the favourite epithet by which he describes alike the invisible God and Jesus, in whom the grace of God is made manifest, and whom He also calls God, is our Saviour. Of the five declarations which there He stamps with the seal, "This is a faithful saying," four but vary on the theme of one of them, "worthy of all acceptation," "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. i. 15). His own experience of Christ was supremely that of a Saviour. Long before, when another man appealed to him, amid all the distraction of nervous excitement, risk of dismissal, temptation to suicide, spiritual concern, "What must I do to be saved?" his prompt reply was, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 30, 31). And when he sits down deliberately to introduce himself by letter to the Church at Rome, in the very forefront of his Epistle he puts this statement, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. i. 16).

In John's writings the hymns of the Apocalypse simply throb with the theme, Salvation. The "Hosannas" (="Save now, we beseech Thee") of the triumphal entry have turned from prayer to praise, thanks for salvation accomplished. And there is something significant in the way in which in his Gospel he records the striking saying of Caiaphas. It stuck in his memory. Twice over he repeats it. "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." Like the derisive sneer of the priests, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save," it was so cynically meant, but so profoundly true. Caiaphas said so much more than he knew. "This he said not of himself; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but that He might also gather together into one the children of God that are scattered abroad." It was the underlying truth of the words of Christ's unscrupulous judge as to the very meaning of Christ's mission, that fixed the words so indelibly in John's mind. Sixty years after their utterance, they are as fresh as the day they were said. John could not forget them. Jesus was such a Saviour (John xi. 49–52; cf. xviii. 14).

These passages from outstanding leaders give explicit utterance to what was commonly believed as to the nature and purpose of the mission of Christ. But what is conclusive is the position they accorded Him. They were never content to repeat His doctrine. They were supremely anxious to tell about Him. And the very silence of the Epistles on single points, as we have seen, is due to anxiety ever to bring Christ before men in the supreme crisis, dying on the Cross and raised to God's right hand. What is to account for this solicitude always so to present Christ as to produce the most vivid impression and awaken the

deepest conviction? What is to account for their anxiety, no matter at what cost of hardship or toil, to bring the news of Jesus the Crucified within reach of all mankind? What, but the conviction that thereby Jesus was fitted to meet the most pressing need of men, and that, in their view, was deliverance from sin—salvation.

Granted then that Jesus came to the world on a mission of salvation, it is necessary to inquire next as to the need for such a mission. What is there in the nature or condition of men that calls for it?

A. On the nature and constitution of man the New Testament throughout is substantially in agreement with the teaching of the Old Testament and of the Rabbinical Schools.[1] It would be quite a mistake, however, to look in any one of these sets of teaching for an elaborate anthropology. The whole of the definite statements are essentially popular in form, and make no pretence to scientific precision. All through they are dealing with man as he recognises himself without the aid of biological or metaphysical research. There is, indeed, ample evidence that in the course of centuries man came to understand better the significance of his own nature. There is evidence of an advance from a more or less national consciousness to the recognition of individual responsibility, and in Christ's teaching that is confirmed and completed by the enforcement of the concomitant social obligations. There is marked progress in the hope of immortality, which grows in distinctness down the course of Old Testament times, and is carried even farther in the Rabbinical Schools. And this, too, is consummated by Christ. Expressly dissociating Himself from the Sadducees and their denial of a resurrection, and taking His stand with the Pharisees, the party which on many other matters He has so much reason to

[1] See Dillmann, *Alttest. Theologie*, §§ 39, 40; Weber, *Altsyn. Pal. Theologie*, §§ 46, 47.

reprove, He "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

The nearest approach to a piece of psychological analysis is 1 Cor. ii. 11–15, iii. 3, where Paul distinguishes between the carnal, the natural or psychical, and the spiritual man. But, on reflection, it is evident that the terms used really describe different types of men by the habitual bent of their nature, according as one side of it or another is allowed to assert itself and dominate the rest. The carnal man is simply the man who allows his own personal predilections to predominate, and the mention of jealousy and strife, as features of this fleshly type, are significant as to the real meaning of σάρξ to the apostle's mind. The natural or psychical man is the man who uses his higher faculties, but looks no farther than the earthly, who leaves God out of account in his reckoning of the world. The spiritual man is the man who includes God in his thought of the universe, and reaches out towards Him as the controlling factor in it. It does not point, therefore, to a trichotomy, does not take us beyond the single, well-recognised distinction of body and soul. It is an ethical classification, intended to bring out, not the various elements in man's nature, but the character of man according to the factor which he allows to control his conduct and mould his character.

The common conception of man was the popular one, of a being possessing, to begin with, a body of flesh, σῶμα, practically equivalent to our organism, and σάρξ, the material of which it is composed. He has powers of movement, generally accompanied and influenced by feelings, which again can also be produced in other ways; and thoughts interpret them. There is, too, power of control and selection in action, with the knowledge of right and wrong, and the sense of responsibility for the selection made and the control exercised. There is the

knowledge of other bodies, recognised as similarly equipped, which all are interdependent, but of which each recognises its own individuality, its Self. But when Self is said, we have reached the independent element, which lies at the core of every human bodily existence, which we call personal, the I or Ego, with its faculties for intercourse with the world around, with others of its own kind, and with the God above, and which differentiates its possessors from other animate beings, and constitutes them man. It follows then that soul is not something a man has, a piece of property like a hat or coat or a bank-book, nor one member among several, like lungs or legs or liver. It is not an impalpable something lurking in some out-of-the-way corner of heart or brain, as slippery as mercury, and as difficult to grip. The soul is the radical part of the man, his true self, the basis of his true life. The design of human life is the service of, and fellowship with, God, and in these it attains its perfection, and will last for ever. That is the New Testament view of man as he ought to be, and so equipped as to be what he ought to be.

If proof were asked, the most probable answer would be a finger pointing to Jesus of Nazareth; and He would have admitted the validity of the argument. All would have approved Pilate's *εὕρηκα* and invitation, Ecce homo! *ἴδε ὁ ἄνθρωπος*, "behold *the* Man!" (John xix. 4, 5). All would have endorsed Paul's phraseology, "a perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. iv. 13). Whatever more these words imply,—and they do involve much more,—they certainly suggest that the perfection of humanity was once attained, and that was in Christ. As a claim on Christ's own part we must consider this further, when we study the teaching as to His Person. But one thing we may accept just now, and that is, that for Jesus and for His disciples, His life was the embodiment of human perfection.

When we recall the whole circumstances of that life, its extraordinary lowliness, simplicity, and unobtrusiveness, in such marked contrast with the careers which fired the ambitions and won the laurels of the ancient world, and which do the same still, we are forced to notice that with Jesus and His followers the matter of supreme importance is the soul, and the proper development of its spiritual capacities. Not that He or they were ascetics, treating the flesh as if it were essentially the seat of sin. "The Son of man came eating and drinking" (Matt. xi. 19). And if Paul calls for abstinence, it is to be in a spirit of self-denial, not for its own sake but for the sake of others (Rom. xiv. 13 ff.). Mere outward conditions are of little importance. The poor are as dear to Christ as the rich (1 Cor. vii. 18 ff.). Paul can only admire the divine impartiality, upsetting pride of intellect or birth (1 Cor. i. 26 ff.). James repels indignantly the respect of persons—so unlike God—which he sees springing up in the communities to which he writes (Jas. ii. 1). The soul, the spiritual nature of man, is supreme. It is capable of knowing God, and of entering into fellowship with Him, and so a chorus arises from Christ and His apostles, in which these are the themes: "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness"; "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him"; "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost"; "Go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, follow Me, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven"; "Bodily exercise profiteth a little, godliness is profitable unto all things"; "Thou hast much goods laid up for many years! Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee, and then whose shall these things be?" "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world

and lose his own soul, or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" Everywhere and always it is the supremacy of the soul and its interests that Christ and His disciples inculcate. His treatment of the moral law in the Sermon on the Mount is all regulated by this principle, and it guides Paul, when he tears mere ritualism to tatters in the Epistle to the Colossians. The spiritual life is the supreme concern.

Having laid this strong foundation, Christ emphasised also the intimate relation of all human lives. His favourite phrase, "the Kingdom of God," in so far as it suggests the subjects of which it is made up, implies this. So does His own life, lived out, not in seclusion but in a family, under the discipline and drudgery of a trade to supply common human needs, and amid throngs of men. So, too, does the law which He illustrates in the parable of the Good Samaritan, and by which He would have all men regulate their conduct to their fellows, "love your neighbour as yourself." But probe deeper still, and you find that this is due to His intense perception of what we now call the solidarity of the race. You meet this in its most fully developed expression in many passages in Paul. It is all there in a phrase like, "we are members one of another" (Eph. iv. 25). It is the basal thought of all those figures in which he describes the community of believers as a vital organism. It is the principle underlying the argument in Rom. v. 12–21. It was evidently vaguely present to the mind of the author of Hebrews, when he speaks of Levi paying tithes in Abraham (vii. 9, 10). It underlies Paul's sense of personal debt to the Greek and the barbarian as well as to the Jew, and his conviction of the unity of the human race. But he owed the thought to Christ, his Master. It was suggested in His figure of the vine and the branches (John xv. 1 ff.). It explains His parables of the kingdom, the leaven and the mustard seed (Matt. xiii.

31–33). It is the clue to His so frequent treatment of the men of His nation as a composite whole, a "generation" exercising common influences upon one another, and developing a particular character, in which they show the continuity of type from father to son, and so incur a national responsibility and judgment (Matt. xxiii. 34–36).

But this solidarity is not emphasised at the expense of the idea of individual accountability and moral responsibility. If the one is enforced, so is the other. Race privileges are, by Christ and His apostles alike, ruthlessly set aside, if anyone seeks to make capital out of them so as to condone the neglect of personal obligations. Just as little will Christ listen to a suggestion, that the proverb censured by Ezekiel is legitimate in His day, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge" (Ezek. xviii. 1, 2; cf. John ix. 3). And the individual must bear the brunt of judgment for the way he has managed his own life. But this is so obvious that there is no need to do more than mention it.

Christ also, as I have said, spoke out with unequivocal distinctness the immortality of the soul, or rather, the persistence of the life of man. The latter phrase is preferable, because it is questionable if either Jesus or His apostles ever did think of the existence of a human soul apart from a body. Paul's argument, both in 1 Cor. xv. and 2 Cor. iv. and v., seems to imply very distinctly that the soul, to his mind, was always associated with a body of some kind, the kind being determined by the condition, natural or spiritual, earthly or heavenly, under which the soul was existent at the time. The terms of the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus suggest the same thing. And the conditions of the resurrection body of the Lord seem also to involve it. The conviction grows stronger, when we remember that to Christ's mind man, as he ought to be, is not naturally subject to death. Death is an intrusion

and penalty, as we know it. Man really is immortal. His life is eternal. Death is an anomaly, an enemy, with no place of inherent right in his constitution.

Equally important is the prominence Christ gives to the grand ideal of human life, namely, likeness to God, our Father in heaven. This likeness consists in the attainment of a perfectly holy life, which is the reproduction in us of the benign character of God Himself, and which is at once the condition and result of perfect fellowship with Him. It is therefore the harmonious fulfilment of all moral and religious obligations, and both alike as duties to God. Passage after passage must occur to the reader from every New Testament writer to bear this out. And it is exemplified to the full in the case of Jesus Himself. But what is of great moment, though not quite so obvious, both from the experience of Jesus and the testimony of His apostles, the perfection of the ideal is to be attained through a process of training and the successful endurance of testing (Matt. x. 22; John xv. 2, xvi. 33; 1 Pet. iii. 13–16; Jas. i. 12; Heb. xiii. 3 ff.). That is the meaning of Christ's own temptation, for the facts of which He alone can have been the authority; of the transfiguration, when perfection in action was complete and its legitimate reward made plain; and of the agony in the Garden and the sufferings on the tree, where, as the Epistle to the Hebrews expresses it, "He was made perfect through suffering" (Heb. ii. 10). What was seen in the experience of Christ is said of other men. In the first chapter of his Epistle, James treats trial as no hardship but a blessed privilege, that goes to the making of men and the fitting of them for all that God intended with them and is willing to bestow. Such, too, is the meaning of all Paul's glorying in tribulation (Rom. v. 3 ff.) and Peter's call to patience under it (1 Pet. ii. 20), while John sees men already sons of God, moving along a pathway of self-purification under the stimulus of hope

of perfect likeness to Christ, when He appears (1 John iii. 1–4).

With such views as to man's nature, giving prominence to these elements in his constitution, regarding him as fitted for communion with God, and as capable, by the proper use of his powers, of affording God the noblest service which it is possible for Him to obtain and which He desires, namely, the voluntary devotion of the whole being to the accomplishment of His will, it is only what was to be expected that Jesus should insist on the infinite value which God attaches to man. "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? . . . Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Matt. vi. 25–30). Listen to that beautiful lyric, hear it from Christ's lips, and look at it in the light of His presence in our world, and His work while here; and, if we are not prepared to say with Mr. A. J. Balfour, "If men need to have brought home to them that, in the sight of God, the stability of the heavens is of less importance than the moral growth of a human spirit, I know not how this end could be more completely attained than by the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation,"[1] it is only because still more forcible seems the proof offered in the sequel to the Incarnation, for which indeed, as far as we are told, that paved the way, namely, the saving death on the Cross. That is Christ's answer to His own question, What will a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matt. xvi.

[1] *Founaations of Belief*, p. 347 f.

26). God gave His own Son to death for us all. His mission, as undertaken and carried on by Himself, and as understood and explained by all His exponents, declares emphatically the priceless value of the human soul.

Such is man's nature, then, as Christ conceived it. These are the elements of supreme importance, and which give him his value in the sight of God. And man using all these powers, as Jesus did, for the glory of God, is man as he can be, man as he ought to be, man fulfilling the design which God always had in view—"whom He . . . foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son" (Rom. viii. 29),—man able to enjoy fellowship with God, to provide the worshippers for whom the Father seeks (John iv. 22–24). In other words, though it is only true of one of the race, that is man righteous (= man as he ought to be), "the Just One," as Christ is repeatedly and significantly called (Acts iii. 14, xxii. 14; 1 John ii. 1).

B. But man as he ought to be and man as he is are two very different creatures. Neither Jesus among the people of Palestine, nor the apostles among the wider circle of nations to whom they went, ever met with a single individual who at all corresponded, or even imagined that he corresponded, with God's ideal, as they presented it in its recognised perfection. Everywhere there was the most painful contrast. Human nature was a total wreck. Disease had invaded the bodily frame. The mental powers were distorted. And these defects were the counterpart of the moral and spiritual collapse. The social organism was as disastrously affected as the individual. Conflict, not harmony, was the prevailing condition between man and man. Mankind was unfit, and had no appetite, for fellowship with a holy God. The true ideal of manhood did not exist even in idea. Christ describes the state in which He found men by the figure of a lost sheep, a lost coin, a lost child. He is a physician come to those who are sick.

They are blind leading the blind. The lost child is as one dead. And "slaves," "perishing," "lost," "dead," are common terms to describe the state which they have reached. As for the cause of it, that is sin.[1] And to understand Christ's mission, it is imperative to know what Christ Himself thought, and what He taught others to think, of this dark fact which necessitated it, the fact of sin.

In treating of sin, Christ and the apostles revert to the fundamental positions of the Old Testament. They re-emphasise the points to which an Isaiah, a Jeremiah, and an Ezekiel had to recall or to direct the thoughts of their fellow-Israelites, setting aside mere ritual and external righteousness as worthless while heart-faithfulness there was none, and sending home to each individual the solemn fact of his own responsibility. There are points, however, which it is important to notice in their several views of the nature, the origin, and the effects of sin.

To begin with, these preliminaries should be noted.

(*a*) The treatment of the subject of sin involves one notable distinction between the Master and His School, and that is, the point from which they approach it. To Christ, it was a matter which He knew only from without by observation. He had no personal experience of it. He knew no sin. The apostles, on the other hand, were themselves sinful men, men who knew what sin was by the sad lessons learnt through committing it. They had been sinners. But they were also saved sinners, whose vision of sin had been purified and intensified by their contact with Christ. And for the flash of God's resentment, which kindles in the eye of Christ, as He sees sin's

[1] Cf. E. B. Browning, *Aurora Leigh*, p. 32—

"Man
Is born in ignorance of his element,
And feels out blind at first, disorganised
By sin i' the blood."

basest manifestations, you have with the apostles the poignant agony of a sinner's regret, that he had ever so contemned divine wisdom and love.

(*b*) A second noteworthy point is, the vocabulary used in the School of Christ to describe sin. The apostles use few words to describe it that are not in use by Christ Himself. *Ἁμαρτία* (sin, in the generic sense), *ἀδικία* (sin, in the face of the truth), *ἀνομία* (lawlessness), *παράπτωμα* (violation of right, involving guilt), *σκάνδαλον* (sin, as it becomes a snare to others)—all these are terms used by Christ; and any other terms used by the apostles are practically synonymous with one or other of them. What they all involve, as used by Christ and His followers, is a reference beyond the legal and the ethical. They point out to God.

(*c*) A third point of importance in getting at their view of the nature of sin is, that Jesus and His disciples are far more interested in the cure than in the disease. Their moral and spiritual pathology has in it nothing of the morbidity of a modern novelist, who drags the depths of the human cesspool, and boasts of his loyalty to truth alone, as he exposes hideous details, but seemingly with no higher aim than this vile delineation. Paul takes us into the sink of Roman degeneracy. Jesus lays open the whited sepulchre of Pharisaic hypocrisy. But what is their intent? It is avowedly to show the need and the might of the salvation they declare. Sin is not their subject, but sin's cure.

(*d*) Hence also it is characteristic of them, and shows their strong ethical bent, that they are more concerned with sinners than with sin, and speak more frequently of sin in the concrete than of sin in the abstract. But yet, while recognising degrees of wickedness, they regard all gradations of it as various expressions of one radical evil. They are symptoms of one disease which affects one man in one way, another in another. But the cure is a panacea.

There is not a separate specific for each set of symptoms. Hence we say the disease is one—sin. Any apparent variety in the method of treatment is due to the variety of patients. All are afflicted with the same soul-trouble, but their various dispositions and temperaments have to be kept in view in applying the cure. They are each and all sinners. The figure of a disease, so commonly used in speaking of sin, occurs all the more naturally, because it seems like a malignant bacillus chronically present in greater or less activity in the constitution of man. At other times, it is so vividly personified as to appear almost as a second personality struggling against the true self for the mastery of the man (Rom. vii. 7 ff.). But this is no more to be taken literally than the language of Tennyson's *Two Voices*, or of Clough's *Dipsychos*, or of Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. It only brings into strong relief the fact that sin has its seat in the very core of man's being, commences in a state of divided affections, and issues in a fatal, vicious choice.[1]

This tracing of sin to its seat in the very heart of man at once disposes of the idea, common enough in Christ's time and since, and which He and His apostles, among Jew and Gentile alike, had to explode, that sin is a mere matter of neglect of ritual (Matt. xv. 11–20), or of deviation in outward act from a prescribed rule of conduct (Matt. v. 19–48). "He that offendeth in one point," says James, "is guilty of all" (ii. 10). His one act shows the state of his heart, and who is master there: "And ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. vi. 24—where mammon stands for all that competes with God for the heart's allegiance). The reason why that cannot be is twofold: men cannot do it; and God will not have it. Christ asserts the first (Matt. vi. 24) without fear of contradiction. Paul endorses

[1] For a wonderfully vivid statement on the subject of sin, see Amiel's *Journal*, new edition, 1889, p. 164.

it out of his own bitter experience (Rom. vii. 7 ff.). James states how intolerable it is to God (Jas. i. 6, 7). And Christ the Master and Paul His servant tell us why: "His servants ye are to whom ye obey" (John viii. 34; Rom. vi. 16–20). Sin, then, for one thing, is disobedience to God's will, and that as a state of the heart, of which the individual acts of sin are only the outward expression.

But there is another way of stating the nature of sin observable in Christ's teaching, especially as recorded in John, and more prominently still in the teaching of the apostles, and that is, that it consists in unbelief, and especially refusal to believe in Jesus as the Christ. This view is brought into line with the other by the saying of Christ: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent" (John vi. 29). After that, it is no surprise to hear Christ say of the coming of the Spirit: "He shall convict the world of sin, because they believe not on Me" (John xvi. 8). But this marks the change that has passed over the form of Christ's statements as to the nature of sin. In the Sermon on the Mount it appears as antagonism to God and want of trust in Him. Later, His constant reproach, and the matter on which He makes man's fate depend, is lack of faith in Himself as the Sent of God. This becomes the touchstone by which is brought to light the true state of men's hearts toward God. And His apostles, when once they have preached Christ to men, find the root-evil in man in rejection of their message about Him. Sin is Antichrist. The reason of the change is not far to seek. It is not, as I have just shown from Christ's own words, due to a different idea as to the essence of sin. It is in harmony with the deeper view of sin as a state of man's inmost being, and of faith as essentially the proper attitude of mankind toward God. And that Christ Himself should become the critical object of sin's antagonism was only what was to be expected as His claims were revealed,

understood, and acknowledged. It is due to a new understanding of the dignity of the person sinned against in Jesus. In Him sin really reaches its invariable, ultimate object—God. Sin, therefore, is an ellipse of antagonism to God revealed in Christ, of which the poles are distrust and disobedience to His will.

What is sin's natural history? What is its origin? According to Dr. Watson, this is a question on which, if the School of Christ has expressed any opinion, it has done so without guidance from the Master. In one of many passages in the *Mind of the Master*, in which he has sacrificed accuracy for epigram, he tells us "that the conventional history of sin has three chapters—Origin, Nature, Treatment. It is characteristic of Jesus that He has only two; He omits genesis and proceeds to diagnosis."[1] Does He omit "Genesis"? His whole attitude towards the Old Testament suggests that He does not. And He certainly traced the antagonism of some of His opponents to a very definite origin: "Ye are of your father the devil" (John viii. 44). But the truth is, that both Christ and His apostles are chiefly concerned with the origin of sin in the individual, not in the race. They see men lost in the crowd, lost through neglecting the best side of their nature, gaining the world and losing their own souls,—lost by selfishly seeking to save themselves to the neglect of their fellow-men. But to what do they attribute these fatal results? What is their origin? Three separate answers come from three apostles. James gives the natural history of sin. "Lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, bringeth forth death" (Jas. i. 15). Sin, that is to say, is the daughter of lust, and the mother of death. Its origin lies within the man himself. Paul says, "Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin" (Rom. v. 12). He traces sin to

[1] *Mind of the Master*, p. 91 f.

Adam. John goes a step farther back still and says, "He that doeth sin is of the devil" (1 John iii. 8). Does this variety mean fundamental difference of view? Or is there a common point, where they all converge? The truth is that each one in his own way is stating a common fact, and offering an explanation of it. The fact is the fact of temptation and of man's collapse before it. The explanation they find in either a malignant foe or a vitiated human nature.

(*a*) The true secret of man's sin, to the minds of Christ and His apostles, lies in the unfortunate issue of the operation of one of the conditions of the attainment of human perfection. We saw that Christ and His apostles regarded man as destined to realise his ideal through the discipline of trial. But trial has been taken advantage of by hostile forces without man in order to find a favourable point of assault upon him. These hostile forces are found concentrated where John finds them, in the devil. The temptation of our Lord shows Christ's view of the matter. His other references to a personal spirit of evil are far too numerous and explicit to be resolved into accommodations to popular forms of thought or into figurative expressions for an evil principle. He is come, as John says, to destroy the works of the devil (1 John iii. 8). And not alone in John's Gospel, but throughout the Synoptics, He acts as in conflict with a personal adversary, whom He regards as the cause of man's woes and sins. Nothing can be more significant of the strength of His conviction as to the extent of the havoc wrought by His opponent, and the reality of his existence, than the parable of the Tares. His own key to the parable is final for its meaning (Matt. xiii. 24–30, 36–42). It is arbitrary to resolve one of the actors into a personification, while his direct antagonist is a genuine personality. The secret of sin in man, therefore, is found originally, in harmony with Christ's teaching, out-

side of man in a tempter, the devil. (Cf. Rom. xvi. 20; Eph. iv. 27, vi. 11; 1 Pet. v. 8; Jas. iv. 7.)

(*b*) When once, as the result of yielding to temptation, sin has obtained foothold within human nature, it finds in each life, which has succumbed to it, a more or less efficient agent in the propagation of its pernicious work, and every writer in one way or another bids his readers "beware of men." This I take to be the meaning of Christ's striking warning in Luke xii. 5, "Fear him which, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell." This cannot refer to God, for in the very next line the preserving, protecting care of God is offered as the safeguard against this foe. There is nothing in the context to suggest that it is the devil. The passage is full of the dangers, more serious even than those of cruel persecution, which arise from the subtle, seductive influence of the hypocrisy of the Pharisee, and the temptation that the fear of him begets. The really dangerous one, therefore, is not the man who simply, in rude brutality, does another to death, but he who undermines his brother's loyalty to God, shatters his faith, and so ruins his soul. This source of temptation is intensely subtle, and is the factor in sin which makes it *σκάνδαλον*.

(*c*) But what of James and his tracing of sin to lust, desire? It is a fair question, whether James in speaking of *ἐπιθυμία*—desire—as exercising this influence on men, is not in line with the Rabbinical idea of יֵצֶר הָרַע, or the element naturally in the flesh, which made it peculiarly susceptible to temptation. This element was not regarded as in itself evil or incompatible with sinlessness, and its presence was explained as a divine provision for enabling man to become entitled to divine rewards for resisting it.[1] If so, it might be that here we have also the clue to Paul's verdict on the flesh: "In my flesh dwelleth no good thing".

[1] See Weber, *op. cit. supra*, *sub voce*.

(Rom. vii. 18), and so a point of common ground be established between Paul and James.[1] But James is not propounding a theory of the origin of sin. He is simply dealing with man just as he found him. He is holding the mirror up to him for the practical purpose of letting him see the working of his own nature in every sin, and hence his personal responsibility for it. If he sin, he must take the consequence, and there is none to blame but himself. The exhortation, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God" (v. 13), is the correlative of the prayer taught by Christ, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil" (Matt. vi. 12, 13). James is not propounding a theory. He is appealing to the common workings of the human heart.

But what of the contention that Paul, differing from the others, regards sin as inherent in one factor in human nature, namely, the flesh? As a preliminary, it is necessary to recall that, to the mind of Jesus, the flesh was the side of human nature most susceptible to the assaults of temptation. Out of the terrible impression of His own agony of conflict in the Garden, when all the horror of the approaching passion wrung from His shrinking human nature the cry, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me,"—a feeling which was only overcome by the strong mastery of the filial spirit,—"nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt," He comes to find His disciples asleep. With concern, He arouses them: "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." It was

[1] What militates against the idea that Paul is here influenced by the Rabbinical view is that according to it alongside of יֵצֶר הָרַע there was always found יֵצֶר הַטּוֹב; and Paul says, "In my flesh dwelleth no good thing." But it is unfair to press a sentence like this, uttered evidently under the pressure of strong personal emotion, into evidence for a strict theological judgment. And the context in Rom. vii. 14 ff., and the parallel in Gal. v. 17 ff., make it plain that σάρξ here refers not to the material flesh, but is used as in popular parlance for human nature.

through the flesh the assault had just been attempted on Himself. In these words experience speaks (Matt. xxvi. 36–46). For the rest, in the vocabulary of Christ and the others, flesh is used almost as a synonym for human nature. But, withal, the word is rare, compared with its use in Paul. With him it is a favourite word. The question is, Does he think of it as inherently sinful? Those who say so lay great stress in favour of their contention on Rom. viii. 3. There Paul speaks of God's Son being sent "in the likeness of sinful flesh," using this periphrasis, it is said, to avoid the simple phrase "in the flesh," which, it is assumed, would have involved that Christ thereby incurred sin. But quite as natural an explanation is, that in the context Paul is using the term "flesh" repeatedly to describe human nature as he actually found it, with its sinful tendencies in overmastering force. Hence a fine sense for what was seemly led him to modify the phrase when he came to describe the contact of God's Son with this element in human nature, commonly, but not necessarily, under the power of sin. His language is dictated by literary taste, not by a theory as to the nature of flesh. And what confirms this is that he immediately goes on to argue, that the presence and work of Christ in the flesh is the condemnation of sin there. That proves that sin in the flesh is where it has no right to be. The very addition of the adjective "sinful" to flesh suggests that flesh by itself does not necessarily imply sin. Sin is an intruder and a usurper there, frustrating the realisation of the purpose which God had in view in creating man and in laying down the laws of his being. It is impossible, therefore, to argue from this passage that Paul regards flesh as essentially sinful; and the passage is crucial. It would be as fair to argue that for Paul the law was sin, from the disastrous effects which, he saw, flowed from the operation of the law. But any such plausible deduction he anticipated and repelled (Rom.

vii. 7 ff.). Had it occurred to him that the same use might be made of his language about the flesh, he would have entered a like caveat here. "Is the flesh sin? God forbid. But I am a sinner, and have yielded my flesh as a slave to sin." He felt, however, that the common use of the term was too familiar to incur any such risk among his contemporaries. And as modern scholarship has taught us to remember, Paul wrote for the popular ear of his own time, and not for pedantic scholars of the nineteenth century. When account is taken of passages in which Paul enumerates works of the flesh, and among them includes such sins as pride, envy, malice, covetousness (Gal. v. 20), it is impossible to regard "flesh" as used in any merely physical sense. It has acquired an ethical connotation. And when, further, he again and again anticipates, and calls for, the use of the bodily, fleshly, members, when freed from sin, for their original purpose, the service of holiness (Rom. vi. 16–21), and speaks of the life of Jesus becoming manifest in our mortal flesh (2 Cor. iv. 11),—an extraordinary phrase, if flesh is essentially sinful,—the conviction is confirmed, that Paul's use of flesh is not technical and exact, but fluid and popular, and as generally understood by the popular mind. He is in agreement with his Master, Jesus Christ, his old-fashioned colleague James, and his serene survivor John, in using flesh without implying sin as an essential element in it, but simply as an equivalent for human nature as it is commonly met with, and especially that side of human nature most susceptible to the assaults of sin, and in which sin longest retains its sway.[1]

There remains to consider Paul's tracing of sin to Adam. But the proper setting in which to look at this, as will be immediately evident, is in the wider connection of

[1] Cf. Erich Haupt, *Commentary on 1 John* iv. 2, p. 211 f.: "Das Fleisch ist nicht Sünde . . . wohl aber ist es durch und durch von der Folgen der Sünde betroffen."

another aspect of sin, common to Christ and His apostles, and that is its range and its results, both in the individual and in the race. All agree that it has affected every man, and every man in every part. Christ's verdict is that "there is none good but one, that is, God" (Matt. xix. 17); and the result of Paul's searching scrutiny is that "there is none righteous, none that understandeth, none that seeketh after God" (Rom. iii. 10). This does not mean that either Jesus or His followers gave way to indiscriminate judgment of their kind (Luke xii. 47 f.). Jesus, even when treating men as sinners, felt that He could appeal to latent better feelings within them ("Ye, *being evil*, know how to give good gifts unto your children," Matt. vii. 11), and awaken conscience in very bad men ("He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her," John viii. 7). Paul can think of Gentiles "doing by nature—*i.e.* not by express command—things written in the law," at the very time when he is stating his great arraignment to show the whole world guilty before God (Rom. ii. iii.). Amid the common alienation from God, they recognise degree in its extent; stages in the degradation of the race (Matt. xii. 43–45, Rom. i. 19 ff.); some not far from the kingdom of God (Mark xii. 34); publicans and harlots more accessible to grace than hypocrites (Matt. xxi. 31); more tolerable for one city than for another (Matt. xi. 20–24); good for a man if he had never been born (Matt. xxvi. 24). But this does not prevent them from recognising the widespead havoc, what we call man's total depravity, *i.e.* not the utter destruction of all good in man, but the contamination by sin of every part (*totus*) of his nature (Eph. iv. 17–19). This only becomes the more obvious when account is taken of those passages which emphasise sin's hold on all the members of the human race. The commencement of the Epistle to the Romans contains Paul's terrible indictment of the whole race, Jew and

Gentile alike. And there is nothing so complete anywhere else. But Paul only expresses in his way what is otherwise stated in John's first Epistle (i. 6–10), and what is implied repeatedly in the irony of Christ's reserve: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners" (Matt. ix. 13); "They that are whole have no need of the physician" (Mark ii. 17); "he that is without sin among you," etc. (John viii. 7). What is the impression left in every instance where Christ speaks in such a way? Is it not that the righteous in reality do not exist, and those who imagine themselves righteous are more deeply sunk in sin than the men they condemn? Look at Paul's statement as to Adam's relation to the sin of the race in the light of all this, and in the light of the context in which it occurs (Rom. v. 12–21), and it becomes plain that it is his way of explaining the same feature, the widespread prevalence of sin.[1] That is due to a principle in human nature, recognised in common by Christ and His apostles, which we have already noted, namely, its organic structure, its solidarity. This works laterally. It also works vertically, when we call it heredity. It has so worked in the case of sin, and death is the proof of it. But in the passage where Paul states this, it is not the origin of sin that is uppermost in his mind. He is not anxious to trace sin to Adam. He is thinking of the accessibility of salvation to all, and he simply accepts the commonly current view of the origin and spread of sin and its entail as an instructive counterpart to the method adopted for the operation of salvation in conformity with the constitution of the human race. Both sin and salvation work on the same principle by which all can be reached through a single individual. By this sin affected all; but what is of far more importance, so may salvation.

In looking at the results of sin, there is no need to

[1] Cf. Weizsäcker, *Apostolic Age*, i. 149 f.

repeat the statement of the disastrous effects upon man, which we have been compelled to notice in the consideration of the subject so far. It is not necessary to show the evident agreement between the Master and His School as to the connection between life's miseries, or even death, and sin. True, He will not countenance any inference as to the immediate relation, or the extent of it, in any individual case (John ix. 3; Luke xiii. 1–6). But the terms in which a cure is sometimes granted show the thought of His heart: "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee," etc. (John v. 14, viii. 2). The more terrible aspect of it is that sin becomes its own punishment; sin is itself an effect of sin.[1] The alienation from God may become determined and confirmed, and reach a stage which is irretrievable. Jesus, John, and the author of the Hebrews all deal with this state. John does so with such reserve that it is impossible to gather more than his solemn conviction, that there is a sin past praying for—"unto death" (1 John v. 16). Heb. vi. 4–10[2] is much more explicit, for there it is evident that this is the result of deliberate repudiation of the way of salvation in the face of a thorough understanding of it, and a certain participation in the benefits of it. And Christ Himself is the most explicit of all. He warns the Pharisees of their danger of reaching this state (Matt. xi. 23). He foretells the fate of Capernaum as a result of it. He states explicitly that it is blaspheming the Holy Ghost (Matt. xii. 31 f.; Mark iii. 28–30; Luke xii. 10). From the context, where this is contrasted with blaspheming the Son of man, which may be forgiven, it is clear that it represents the attitude of a man who, with his eyes open, against his better judgment, from selfish motives, stifles conscience, calls good evil and evil good, even when

[1] Luke xv. 11 ff.; cf. Rom. i. 24–26; and see Godet, *Commentary on Luke*, *in loco*.

[2] Godet (*Commentary on Luke* xiv. 23–25) finds in Christ's words recorded there the basis of this passage in Hebrews.

good stands incarnate before him in all its perfection (John ix. 39–41, xv. 22–25). What that incurs of divine wrath we know on Christ's authority. He lets us into the secret by depicting the feelings and action of the king scorned and flouted by his invited guests (Matt. xxii. 1–14); of the defrauded and bereaved owner of the vineyard (Matt. xxi. 33–44); of the forgiving master mocked by the graceless, unforgiving servant (Matt. xviii. 23–35). He describes in tragic terms the fate of the city from which He has to withdraw, rejected (Matt. xxiii. 37–xxiv. 1 ff.). How terrible is His description of the doom of the impenitent—"weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth"! (Matt. viii. 12, xiii. 42, 50, xxii. 13, xxiv. 51, xxv. 30; Luke xiii. 28). In what a terrific climax does His invective against hypocrisy culminate: "Ye hypocrites, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell!" (Matt. xxiii. 33). And when He anticipates His speech at the judgment, how final is the verdict and full of woe: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels"! (Matt. xxv. 46). Nothing said by Paul or John, in Epistle or Apocalypse, in anyway modifies these terms. There is only a studied reserve in their fateful words; for all feel, with the author of Hebrews, "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. x. 31).

That fate is impending over all men. Jesus treats the world as under condemnation already (John iii. 18). Paul declares they are without excuse (Rom. i. 20). And all alike throw the responsibility for this position upon man himself. The confession of the prodigal states it all—"I have sinned." It is a personal affair—intensely so. But the question that remains is, is escape possible; and if so, can man save himself, or does he absolutely require deliverance by a friendly hand? Christ's mission answers the first. He has come to save. But we are told that

here there is a radical difference between Christ and His followers, especially between Christ and Paul. Christ, it is said, made a man's escape from sin depend on his own efforts; Paul treated him as helpless, requiring the intervention of Christ; Christ's method of salvation was auto-soteric, Paul's hetero-soteric.[1] As to Paul's position, there is no dispute. But has he transformed so audaciously his Master's message? The way to a reply is to be found in an appeal to Christ Himself. Is it true that all that Christ did was by the force of His religious and spiritual genius, to reach, for the first time, the thought of the Fatherhood of God, and to realise, as had never been done before, the forgiveness of sins to any penitent heart, and proclaim these truths to the world, leaving each man to secure salvation for himself by the application of them to his own case? Is it not indicative of the instability of that position that, in consequence, large portions of Christ's teaching have to be set aside as not genuine, for no other reason than that they do not harmonise with it? It involves, too, a view of divine forgiveness which is little better than a caricature, namely, man's conviction that God has forgiven him, when he has forgiven himself. It reduces Jesus simply to a teacher, and even then assumes for fact that for which there is not even the shadow of proof, namely, that Jesus discovered the nature and value of forgiveness from His own experience of being forgiven.[2] Will that theory explain Christianity and its colossal effects? Indeed, to feel how defective such a view is, we

[1] This contention, though not peculiar to Mackintosh, is put by him in its most uncompromising and aggressive form in his *Natural History of the Christian Religion*, 62 ff. *et passim*. The main purpose of the book, indeed, to which the author constantly recurs, is to prove this transformation of Christ's doctrine at the hands of Paul.

[2] See Mackintosh, *op. cit.* pp. 189–214. Bruce (*With Open Face*, p. 146) might be supposed to supply the needed proof, for there he characterises Christ's words, "I am meek and lowly," in common with those of prophet and psalmist, as "devout breathings of a broken and contrite heart." But did Bruce really think what it meant, when he said "contrite"?

have simply to recall some of the utterances of Jesus referred to at the beginning of this chapter, say, the description of the helpless condition to which He regards man as reduced by sin, or the terms in which He describes His own efforts to rescue man, which, figurative though they are, suggest something far different from even the most indefatigable teaching, and would be quite inappropriate as a description of, say, Paul's efforts, which are purely of this character. Take His statement as to the absolute necessity of the Spirit's intervention before the evil tendencies that have asserted themselves in human nature can be overcome, and the new life begun (John iii. 6). Jesus did call for effort on the part of men themselves, but it was to be in response to an effort of God to reach them. He did magnify the Fatherly love of God, but it was as the secret of His own mission. He did proclaim the forgiveness of sins, but He made it abundantly plain how intimately and necessarily His own death and resurrection were associated with the bestowal of it. Paul has not transformed his Master's teaching in that feature of it. He has only cast upon it the light of his own experience of the Master's work in himself. With one voice Christ and His disciples say man is lost, condemned, helpless, but he is savable. His sin is disappointment to God and disaster to himself. It has left a case of which it may well be asked, "Who then can be saved?" but the answer is explicit: "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible" (Mark x. 26, 27; Matt. xix. 25, 26).

It is at this point the Christian conception of God comes into prominence. For turn where you will among the New Testament teachers, all alike agree not simply that Jesus came into the world on a mission of salvation, but also that He came at the instance of God, was sent by God. In the Synoptics Jesus speaks again and again with

the restless manner of a man under the constraint of an urgent commission. In the Gospel of John He explains words and actions by the will of Him who sent Him. And John and Paul alike speak of His presence among men as a mission from God and a gift from God, with the express purpose in view of saving men. The famous evangelistic text of John is no unique utterance, but the Christian commonplace, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). It is in the light of the mission of salvation, originated and commissioned by God, and executed by the Son of God, that we discover what exactly God is to the thought of Jesus and His followers.

It is true enough to say that for the Christian, Jesus supersedes every other argument both for the Being and the Character of God. The man who has found God in Christ could find no stronger evidence than this at once that God is, and of what God is. But this position does not mean that Christ and His disciples set aside all previously existing ideas about God, began a revelation of Deity *de novo*. They accepted the popular convictions of both Jew and Gentile as to the existence of God. Particularly do they attach themselves to the unbroken testimony of Jewish monotheism. But when they come face to face with polytheistic superstition, it is not with rude, unsympathetic hand to shatter the whole fabric, but, with a genial breath, which welcomes all that is true, to hail in it a witness to a true human instinct, the feeling after God inherent in human nature. Of course there was much there that needed correction; much even in the conceptions of the Jew. But nobody can read James's words, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jas. i. 17); or Paul's speeches in

his first encounter with unrelieved paganism at Lystra (Acts xiv. 8–18), or with its cultured phrases and philosophic settings at Athens (Acts xvii. 22–31),—without thinking of the exquisite lesson of their Master in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v. 45), or hearing the echo of His words to Samaria's daughter by Jacob's well (John iv. 19–24). Christ and His followers endorse all those instincts which carry men outside of themselves to reverence a great power above them, to whom with all the world they owe their existence, under whose law they live, and to whom they are responsible. They concur in all that speaks of His infinite transcendence of His creation. But they will not countenance for a moment the suggestion that He is indifferent to men or beyond their reach. A proneness to find divergences between Paul and His Master places side by side 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10, "Doth God take care for oxen?" and Matt. x. 29–31 (cf. Luke xii. 6, 7), "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father," as if there were some glaring contrast there. Are they not both, in their actual contexts, like Christ's own question, "How much then is a man of more value than a sheep!" (Matt. xii. 12), simply strong ways of bringing out the comparative worth of man and the lower animals, and drawing from God's care for the latter an argument for His vast interest in us? And every word on prayer suggests the same truth. Equally do they teach God's immanence. The Incarnation story of Matthew and Luke tells us how close they thought it possible for God to come to man. Their very views of demoniac possession, the devil's parody of divine indwelling, show how natural to them was the thought of intimate association between the unseen world and the life of men. Divine indwelling is a common theme with Jesus and John and Paul. But with it all there is no suspicion of pantheism. It is God seeking men to worship Him.

What is new and distinctive in the Christ-taught thought of God is, God's interest in, and relation to, man the sinner. Man, as a sinner, has no doubt about one thing in that relationship. He is quite sure of God's wrath against sin. And Christ and His apostles tell him that he is quite right. This conviction is not merely a sinner's craven fear, begotten of the superstitious forebodings of the natural heathen mind. It has been confirmed with terrible emphasis in page after page of the Jewish revelation, and by tragedy after tragedy of Israel's history. And Paul, with strategic skill, in Rom. ii., shows the fatal significance of Jewish condemnation of Gentile corruption, and the perilous position in which they left themselves, if they ignored the forbearance with themselves of a justly offended God. They simply challenged the onslaught of His wrath.[1] But we are told that, admitting the references of Paul and the Apocalypse to the wrath of God, in the New Testament the idea has become almost entirely eschatological, and is scarcely traceable at all in Christ's own teaching. As to the first point, when account is taken of the impressive sense which the New Testament exhibits throughout—I will not say of the immediacy, but—of the impendingness of the divine judgment, in which the wrath will find expression against the ungodly, and of the fact that, in any case, the judgment will be the most terrible manifestation of it, the reality of the wrath of God is in no way reduced in awful significance by saying it belongs to the eschatological. The impression of the future has its moral and religious value, and cannot be discounted in this off-hand way. As to our Saviour's teaching, it is necessary to remember that He offers Himself as a revelation of the character of God; and what but indignation is the meaning of that forcible expulsion of the profaners of the temple (John ii. 13–17; Matt. xxi. 12, 13, and parallels), of that flashing eye turned

[1] Note in ii. 9 the use of both *θυμός* and *ὀργή*, the feeling and its expression.

on the hard-hearted critics of His kindly cure in the synagogue? (Mark iii. 5). What other meaning can you attach to the startling events depicted in one parable after another? (Matt. xiii. 24–49, xxii. 11–13). If these do not imply God's hatred of sin and terrible displeasure with the sinner, words have no meaning. Christ will not allow, indeed, the legitimacy of the inference that the suddenness or severity of the impact of misfortune inevitably proves the enormity of the sufferer's sin (Luke xiii. 1–5; cf. John ix. 1–3). But the refusal is not with a view to dispel all idea of connection between calamity and sin. It is to enforce it. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke xiii. 5). He turns on self-satisfied gossip there in a way that is reproduced in Paul's startling impeachment of the Jew in Rom. ii. 1–17. True, the question is raised as to what exactly the divine wrath is, and is it compatible with love? Was it possible for the teacher who pictured the character of God in the father, in the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke xv.), to attribute to Him this awful feature of wrath? The author, who has preserved that picture, has supplied the answer to the question. On the previous page he has also preserved another picture of God in the master of the house indignant at the slight on his invitations (Luke xiv.), and on that which follows still another in the inflexible condemner of Dives (Luke xvi.). If the one picture is true to God's character, why not the other? In the New Testament, too, we are moving among men who can give and understand such sterling advice as "Be ye angry, and sin not" (Eph. iv. 26). These things show us moral sensibilities sufficiently keen to recognise a place for righteous anger even in a heart dominated by love, and the impression grows that Christ fully accepted what the Old Testament says about the wrath of God. It is too conspicuously present there for Him to have rejected its presentation, as

conveying a false impression about God, without explicitly saying so. Silence here would give consent; and Christ, as we have seen, was not silent, but assenting. But Christ's real attitude is this. He found men had allowed the thought of the wrath of God to dominate their view of Him, leading them, if Jews, to regard all men but themselves as objects of His wrath, and themselves as the favourites (Matt. iii. 9; John viii. 39), who had the secret of how to avert that wrath from themselves by punctilious attention to certain prescribed rules and forms. And, *mutatis mutandis*, the same was true of those of the nations to whom His apostles went. In place of this, Christ had come to teach men that there is no respect of persons with God, and that as a holy God He cannot but hate sin, and be angry with the sinner. But that is neither the first nor the last word about Him. That side of His character had been fully stated, and had produced such an effect that little more needed to be said about it. Only the false inferences from it required to be corrected. And that Christ did above all by persistent reiteration of the supreme truth, which accounts for the very anger and wrath, namely, that God is a Father, a holy Father: "God is Love."

If we were asked for a single phrase in which to describe the God of the apostles, none would come more naturally to our lips than this: He is "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. xv. 6; 2 Cor. i. 3; Eph. i. 3; 1 Pet. i. 3; Col. i. 3, etc.). The combination "God and Father" is of very frequent occurrence, and a careful study of it suggests that the second term "Father" is epexegetical.[1] In the larger phrase, "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," there is not so much a statement of the relationship between the Father and the Son, as a reference to the source of the knowledge that God is a Father, namely, our Lord Jesus Christ. The phrase

[1] Cf. H. J. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 170 f.

means not "the God who has as His Son Jesus Christ our Lord," but "the God who is revealed as a Father by our Lord Jesus Christ" (cf. Matt. xi. 25; John i. 18); God, as we have learned to know Him from our Lord Jesus Christ, "the Father." The justification for this statement is that there is no call to refer to the relationship of Christ to the Father in most of the cases where it occurs, while in several of them the context emphasises such features of the character of God as entitle Him to such a beautiful name. The power to appreciate it, and to use it with spiritual intelligence, is attributed to divine operations in the heart. But the source of the knowledge is Jesus Christ Himself.

Jesus, then, is the revealer of the Father. It is the term in His vocabulary which competes in frequency with the Kingdom of God. And it is a disputed point among theologians whether the Fatherhood of God or the Kingdom of God is to be taken as the determinative idea in grouping the teaching of Christ. We need not at present inquire as to the nature of the source of Christ's own knowledge of this name for God. He ascribed it undoubtedly to the unique relationship to God which He claimed for Himself. And that supersedes any necessity for inquiry into the references to the Fatherhood of God as spoken of in the Old Testament, and still more among heathen nations. Among the latter it meant no more than Creator. Among the Jews it never rose above the national or functional stage (*sc.* the King). On Christ's lips it expresses an individual relationship, and states a truth revealed both by and in Him. It is revealed by Him in such wonderful lessons as the Lord's Prayer and the parable of the Prodigal Son, which vibrate with the delighted reverence, obedience, confidence, which a thorough knowledge of God as Father will inspire. It is revealed in the form into which He throws other lessons on these very topics.

Obedience to God's will is seen in the contrast of the conduct, not of two subjects of a king, or two servants of a master, but of two sons (Matt. xxi. 28 ff.). A true worshipper is one whose spirit meets the craving of a Father (John iv. 24 ; cf. Jas. i. 26). A share in the joys of the kingdom of God is for those who reproduce the character of the Father, who is its king (Matt. v. 48). But even more strikingly than in His words Christ reveals the true character of God by His own habitual attitude towards Him. He lived with a heart so constantly and trustfully directed towards God, that its only fitting parallel on earth is that of a child to a loving parent with whom he has a perfect understanding. The filial affection of Jesus for His God reveals the fatherliness of His God. In John's writings especially we pass beyond the position of a revelation by Jesus to a revelation in Jesus. We learn to recognise what God is, from the attitude of Jesus, not simply towards God, but towards men. His attitude, He claims, is God's attitude. "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father" (John xiv. 9). God's thoughts, feelings, acts towards men are the glorious counterpart of what is seen of grace and truth in Jesus Himself.

But what does Jesus mean by using the term Father? Recall what has just been said, and it is seen at once that the use of the word is figurative. In the light of John viii. 39–56, where Jesus repels the claim of the Jews to regard God as their Father, treats as of very little moment their natural descent from Abraham, and in view of their dispositions and characters tells them "ye are of your father the devil," it is plain that creational relationship is quite secondary in His thought as compared with moral and spiritual affinity.[1] And while in some passages He certainly speaks to men indiscriminately of God as their

[1] Wendt, *The Teaching of Jesus*, ii. 116 : "The mere possession of an earthly life created by God, and the mere physical kinship with the people of the Divine revelation and promises, did not make a man a true child of God."

Father, it is always in a call to them to become like Him, for He never speaks to them indiscriminately of themselves as sons.[1] All that is implied in Father only becomes a reality of possession to those who respond to Him. And hence, while it is quite true that God is pre-eminently the Father, the type of what fatherhood should be—as Paul says, "of whom every fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named" (Eph. iii. 15)—the human relationship only supplies a figure in which to find the most suggestive parallel to God's relationship to man. It is true, supremely true, but only so far as it goes. It goes farther than Shepherd, or Judge, or King, or Husband. It adds much these never could suggest. It is the grandest name for God. But it does not say all, not Elder Brother, for instance, which becomes so significant in view of Christ's own relation to men. It is a figure. It is a figure used by Christ, because it gathers so much into itself. It suggests love,—love which is not simply broad and general, a wide philanthropy, but love personal and individual, love not only responsive but spontaneous, love which has its source and origin in itself, "is its own inspiration." In other words, it suggests what the apostles call "grace." Dr. Dale once quoted with admiration an opinion of Dr. Forsyth, of Leicester, that grace is a word which we have lost, and which we require to recover in our preaching.[2] That is a striking admission from a man who was not a Calvinist, and in an age that prides itself on having rediscovered the teaching of Jesus about the Fatherhood of God, which it was said had been buried under His sovereignty by Calvinists. Perhaps; but true Calvinists did not forget grace. It lay in the heart of their system. And grace is what Dr. Moorhouse calls the essence of Deity, the will not to live but to love.[3] When Jesus says

[1] Dale (*Life*, pp. 605, 654) gives a very fine statement of this point.

[2] Dale's *Life*, p. 636.

[3] *The Teaching of Christ*, p. 113; cf. Bruce, *Parabolic Teaching of Christ*, p. 288: "In the teaching both of Christ and of Paul the supreme category is grace."

Father, and makes the prodigal, come to himself, say with confidence, "I will arise, and go to my father," and when He shows the father receiving the penitent back to the place—not that asked, of a servant, but—of a son, He reveals the persistent love of God, and His eagerness for the opportunity to let it have free play, and He appeals for confirmation of the truth of it to the buried consciousness of the sinner's heart. When Jesus says Father, He says God is Love. He finds in this feeling (which is the secret of man's salvation, for it is the secret of His own mission) the fundamental trait of God's character, the dominating principle of His nature.

But Jesus does not for a moment encourage the idea that this love is mere easy-going affection. Such no true fatherly love is. It involves constant care for all those towards whom it is directed,—a care which culminates in anxiety about their moral and spiritual well-being, and which is willing to endure the pain of inflicting chastisement, if need be, to cure any evil trend. Its highest aim is not the indulgence of every whim and fancy of the child, but his attainment of the noblest virtues and graces within his reach. And all this lies in Jesus' thought of God when He calls Him Father. Nothing else should ever occur to any mind that remembers the character for which Christ calls in every man, and which has its ideal in God's own (Matt. v. 48; Luke vi. 36), or that remembers the petitions of the Lord's Prayer (Matt. vi. 9–13), or the epithets that qualify Father in the Intercessory Prayer—holy, righteous (John xvii. 11, 25). Nothing else corresponds to the delightful certainty of His impartiality, to the extraordinary anxiety for righteousness, and to the overpowering sense of the burning majesty of God, that are found in the writings of James and Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews, or to the resistless inferences John draws from his lightning phrase, "God is Light," in which we read holiness and

truth. The love of a righteous God is loyal to integrity and truth. When Christ says Father, He says that. It suggests no relaxation of these claims. If from our lowered sense of parental authority and dignity we are tempted to think so, we must correct these unworthy conceptions of fatherhood by recalling the very high ideals of it cherished by the Jews and emphasised by Christ and His apostles.[1] Recall the indignation with which He exposed the artifice of scribal tradition, by which a son was enabled to evade the fifth commandment (Mark vii. 9–13). Recall how His apostles bid their readers honour father and mother (Eph. vi. 1–3; Col. iii. 20), or, in Hebrews, even make the experience of parental discipline a proof of sonship (Heb. xii. 5–8). These bring the spirit of the age back to us. And on the lips of Jesus, and in the ears of His hearers, we learn that if Father meant love, it meant also the firmness and discipline dictated by love. The penalty that follows on sin is explained, as well as the forgiveness that awaits the penitent. Still the dominance of the fatherly note, the note of gracious love, receives no more convincing proof than in the fact that two of those who had learnt of Jesus to call God Father, and both of whom saw in Christ's advent the coming of grace and truth, zealous alike as they are for the holy consistency of God, yet find in God's righteousness itself one great encouragement to penitence; for to them, "if we confess our sins, He is—not simply gracious, but—faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity" (1 John i. 9); and He has provided "the propitiation that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus"[2] (Rom. iii. 26).

It remains to ask what was the intended range of the

[1] Cf. Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory*, ii. 204 f.

[2] Principal Shairp, *Studies in Poetry and Philosophy*, p. 380 f.; Godet, *Commentary on John* iii. 15, 16.

salvation Christ came to proclaim. In one sense this was a matter in dispute in the Early Church; in another it was not. There was no dispute that all men might share in it. But it was the contention of one section, that they could do so only under condition of conforming to the Jewish law. Now that was equivalent to limiting salvation to the Jews. It reduced the Good News from a universal to a national platform. There is no real question as to the position of Paul, John, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Acts of the Apostles, on this matter. There is a question as to the attitude of Peter and James. And yet, if we are to accept the high claims for the historic accuracy of Luke,—and we have seen that we should,—there ought to be no question, but a recognition of the fact, that whatever were their first impressions, they too came speedily to see clearly that the salvation proclaimed in and by Christ was accessible to all men without any conforming to the Jewish law as such. It is a question of impression; but surely that is implied in those very passages in Galatians which are supposed to militate against it, and to contradict the situation represented in Acts (Acts xv.; Gal. ii.). Would Paul, when this very matter was in dispute, have appealed, in vindication of his independence and authority, to a stand which he took upon it against a leader like Peter, to whose attitude his impugners appealed, had the issue of that stand been anything but a triumph? True, he does not say so. It may be insinuated that could he have said so, he would certainly have done it. But to my mind the inference was so clear and necessary, that a man of Paul's quick apprehensions, and who would condescend to no disingenuousness, felt no call to put it in words.

The more serious question is, Was this universalism, successfully urged by Paul, the position of Jesus Himself, or even a legitimate inference from His position? That it

was the latter ceases to be a question, as soon as we remember what we have seen was His attitude as to the nature of man and sin and God. In the case of not one of these does Jesus speak from the merely Jewish standpoint. Man, as He describes him, is man in the widest range of his nature, no mere son of the circumcision. Sin is something that goes far beyond infringement of the terms of the Mosaic law. And one is simply surprised to find so little reference in the language of Jesus to God as the God of the fathers of Israel. Such few allusions as there are, are always the result of discussions raised by Jews involving such a reference. And it is questionable if a single utterance can be found, where Jesus spontaneously speaks of God by the equivalent of the day for the Jewish sacred name Jehovah, namely, κύριος, Lord. All that makes it impossible to regard the universalist position as other than a legitimate inference at least from the position of Jesus.

But it is legitimate to go farther. Christ's own position is not obscure. We decline to be robbed of the right of appeal to the words of the Risen Christ.[1] And the commission in the closing verses of Matthew (xxviii. 18–20) are far too explicit to leave any room for doubt. It is universal, and carries not a hint of Jewish conditions. It is, too, only what we would expect, in view of those parables of the spread of the kingdom, such as the Tares, where "the field is the world"; or the Supper, refused by the originally intended guests and enjoyed by the waifs and strays gathered from the streets and lanes, highways and hedges,

[1] Schwartzkopf (*Prophecies of Jesus Christ*, p. 309) rejects Matt. xxviii. 18–20, because, he says, "we cannot conceive how it was possible for the entire Early Church not only to ignore it in the way it did, but to resist the untheocratic mission of Paul to the Gentiles." But the subsequent history of the Christian Church, with its great desert stretches, when this text was regarded as the command of Christ,—and yet not a foreign mission was undertaken, and, if suggested, at once opposed (cf. Raymond Lulli, Carey, etc.),—is the best exposure of the weakness of this argument.

compelled to come in. The comment which follows the similar parable in Matt. xxii. 1 ff., and its more striking context and application in Matt. viii. 5–13, stating the exclusion of sons of the kingdom, while aliens gratefully enter, might be, and indeed has been,[1] pressed to suggest a divergence between Paul and Christ at the opposite extreme, as if Christ contemplated an issue in which there would be a more or less complete rejection of Israel, while Paul (Rom. ix.–xi.) contemplated their ultimate restoral and inclusion in the scheme of salvation. But the only conclusion one can draw from these lines of criticism is the futility of attempts to construct hard-and-fast theories, unsupported by explicit statements, out of the plastic utterances, so apt for their immediate purpose, of our Saviour's parables. At the same time, the possibility of such a construction makes clear how one-sided it is to try to give to Christ's idea of His message a range no wider than the Jewish race. It is true He restricted His own operations to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and in their preliminary journeys during His earthly life He placed the same restriction upon His apostles. But that was only in accordance with His uniformly sober view of the extent of the work possible for Him to overtake under earthly conditions. It is no indication of His idea of the full scope of His message. And there are sufficient indications of its wider reach, in His attitude towards others than Israelites, whom He chanced to meet, and above all, in the delight with which He welcomes their simple, childlike faith (Matt. viii. 10, xv. 28; John xii. 20 ff.).[2]

An objection has been raised, however, by Oscar Holtzmann,[3] that while Jesus, followed by Paul, gave a

[1] I have lost track of the writer who is responsible for this precocious suggestion.

[2] Bruce, *Parabolic Teaching of Christ*, p. 338 ff.; Forrest, *Christ of History and of Experience*, 416 ff.

[3] *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, i. 414 ff.

world-wide range to the love of God and the work of salvation, John presents a different attitude, restricting these to the limited circle of those who are by nature fitted to respond to the love of God for sinners. Now it is not difficult to think of passages of which use may be made to justify such a theory,—passages in which, for instance, John distinguishes between those who welcomed the light and those who did not (John i. 9–13). But what is the explanation of this whole attitude of John, in virtue of which he habitually views mankind as divided into two great classes?[1] It is not due to an inherent dualism, as Orello Cone maintains.[2] It is due to his looking at the work of Christ in the light of the results actually observed. As a matter of fact, in certain directions, the Gospel awakened no response. But John never attributes that to any limitation in the range of the divine grace. The passage in the Gospel (vi. 37, 44, 45) that looks most like doing so loses this complexion, when it is observed that there Jesus is explaining to men the defectiveness of their adhesion to Him. That adhesion was begotten of a purely material crave. It was not a response to the revelation of the Father in Him, or to the teaching of their hearts by the Father as to His ability to satisfy spiritual needs. Hence they do not really believe.[3] The passage is thus but an illustration of John's method, just mentioned, of explaining the course of events from the standpoint of the results. The method was sometimes adopted by Paul (Rom. viii. 28–30, ix.–xi.; Eph. i. 3 ff.). And in the Synoptics Jesus seems to have adopted the same standpoint when He explains His use of parable (Matt. xiii. 11–17; Mark iv. 11 ff.; Luke viii. 9 ff.), and

[1] It is equally prominent in Gospel, Epistle, and Apocalypse, and is skilfully utilised by Milligan as an argument in favour of unity of authorship (*Baird Lecture*, p. 286, and App. II.; *Expositor's Bible*, "Revelation," p. 380).

[2] *The Gospel and its Earliest Interpretations*, p. 272 ff.

[3] Godet and Westcott's *Commentaries on John*, *in loco*.

speaks of the hopelessness of the case of the Pharisees (Matt. xxiii. 29 ff.). It is arbitrary, therefore, from passages in which this is done in John, to restrict the significance of explicit utterances in the same Gospel, that ring with the full note of the world-wide reach of divine salvation, and to which the Christian mind would instinctively turn to prove the universality of the Gospel offer. Look at John's favourite pronoun, grandly indefinite but as grandly comprehensive—"whosoever,"—and texts that do not require to be quoted, but only reference given—John iii. 16, xi. 52; 1 John ii. 2,—and the case against John entirely breaks down.

The attitude of Christ and His apostles, then, was always this: Men were savable, all men, no matter how beset by cares, vanities, engrossments of this life, if only they could be reached. He showed it in His whole plan of operations, putting Himself alongside of men of every type, even the most degraded and vicious, and only seeming to hesitate in the presence of one class—the hypocrites. He used every weapon of spiritual attack in order to overcome prejudice, dispel illusion, awaken reflection, stir conscience, so as to bring men to see their need of His message and its surpassing value for them. He was inspired by the most extraordinary hopefulness, in which, however, there was no blinking the tragic realities and tremendous difficulties. And His disciples reflect His spirit, as they go everywhere with the same message, "preaching the word," *i.e.* proclaiming the word of Good News (*εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν λόγον*, Acts viii. 4).

CHAPTER V

The Kingdom of God and its Variants

Christ's Religio-Ethical Ideal—The intense ethical Interest common to Christ and His Apostles—The Substance of their Ethic identical, as seen in Language and in Conception—Righteousness the Subject of the Sermon on the Mount—Righteousness equivalent to Religion—Inseparable Relation of Ethics and Religion, seen in Motive of Epistles—Its Bearing on the Genuineness of the Pastoral Epistles—Difference in Topics dealt with between Christ and Apostles.

The Substance of Christian Ethics—Endorsement of Law as a Standard of Conduct—The Distinction of Moral and Ceremonial—Transformation of the Law—Law reduced to a single Principle, Love—Does John agree with Jesus and Paul as to its Range?—The Law as Love is a Life—The Dynamic of Christian Ethics—The place of Faith in Christian Ethics—and of Prayer—Christian Ethics social.

The various Terms to describe the Religio-Ethical Ideal—(1) "The Kingdom of God"—The two Forms, Kingdom of God, or of Heaven—The Source of the Phrase, and why Christ used it—Its gradual Disappearance, in Christ's own Teaching, and among the Apostles—Substitutes—Need of a Name for Christian Community—Gradual Selection of (2) "Church"—Its Suitability—Why not at once adopted—How Paul grasped it—Its Relation to Kingdom—(3) "Eternal Life"—Its Relation to Kingdom, seen in two Ways; vital Processes used as illustrative of Christian Community, and the set of cognate Terms—Christian as Child born of God, according to Teaching of Christ in John, and of John, James, Peter, and Paul—Use of *υἱοθεσία*—Eternal Life as Inheritance—Light shed on the Work required of Christ.

The Realisation of the Ideal—Necessary Precautions—Light from previous Discussions—Christ's double View—How accounted for—The Parousia—Significance of Documents preserved—Christ's Eschatology—The *locus classicus*—Four Certainties; His immediate Manifestation in Power, the Fate of Jerusalem, the spread of the Gospel, His final Return—Perplexity as to when—Impression of Imminence—Light from Destruction of Jerusalem—Paul and growth of Predominance of the spiritual Outlook—Ethical Interest supreme in Forecasts—Question of Reward—Final Destiny—Need of Christ for Realisation of this Ideal—The Union in Him.

JESUS looked for the realisation of the object of His mission —a saved humanity—in the complete re-establishment of human society, in perfect ethical relations, and on a religious basis. For a time, at least, He found it convenient to appropriate the phrase, the Kingdom of God, to describe this reconstituted humanity. The phrase, however, was an accommodation, suited to the conditions under which He worked; the conception it denoted is common to the thought of Master and School. All alike agree that the consummation of Christ's mission is reached, when a society has been established in which men fulfil, perfectly and spontaneously, the great original design of their being in reference to God and to their fellow-men. The first commandment and its companion like unto it, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy might; and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," stand unrevoked. Christ's mission is attained when these are fulfilled throughout mankind.

This indicates that here we have to consider the distinctive features of Christian ethics. They include such points as these: the essential connection between morals and religion, the fundamental law of Christian life, the thoroughly social conception of the range of Christian activity. And, first of all, we shall discuss these subjects in their general features, and then compare the various terms by which the community of those who have unitedly embraced these principles is described.

Nobody reading the teaching of Jesus and of the apostles ought ever to miss their common and crowning interest in character. The reconstruction of humanity aimed at by them is in line with their conception of humanity. In that man appears as above all a moral and religious being, or better still, a being bound by the closest ties to his fellow-men, ties which impose obligations that have their deepest springs in the man's religion or relation

to his God. Nothing is more obvious than their profound conviction of the fundamental connection between morality and religion. The fact is so patent that it should not be necessary even to state it. But it is not uncommon to find Jesus and His followers contrasted as if, while this interest in character is supreme in Him, with His disciples it was quite secondary. On that showing, it would seem that Jesus attached no importance to anything He said except what is found in the Sermon on the Mount, and even of that the only important parts would be the Beatitudes, the Revised Law, the Lord's Prayer, the dissuasive from mammon worship, and the "judge not"; while, on the other hand, Paul has written nothing but Galatians and Romans to the end of the fifth chapter, James nothing but an attack on Paul's theory of justification, Peter an obscure saying about the spirits in prison, while John stands aloof saying, in a dreamy, theosophical way, "God is Love." On the one side you have a genial philanthropist, on the other a group of dusty theologians.[1] Now that, or anything the least like that, ignores some of the most obvious facts of the New Testament. Too much cannot be made of the ethical teaching of Jesus Christ. The Church of Christ can never forget what it owes to the author of *Ecce Homo*. But is it, on that account, to forget the burden of the Epistles to the Corinthians? Is no credit to be given to the conclusion Paul draws from his wondrous premises in Romans, "I exhort you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God"—the comprehensive terms in which he sums up the content of all that goes before—"that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. xii. 1, 2)? Does what follows in the Epistle go for nothing? Are we to ignore the practical inculcation of moral duties to which every other Epistle of his leads up, if it be not permeated

[1] *E.g.* Matthew Arnold, *Literature and Dogma*, popular edit. p. 148, *et alii*.

with that line of thought throughout? Is the Church to forget that wonderful souvenir of the Sermon on the Mount, the Epistle of James, or the strong hortatory beat of every line of Peter or of John? What, again, are the tangible conditions of entrance into the circle of Christian fellowship in Acts, and the earliest proof demanded of loyalty to Christ, or what the conditions of enjoying heaven's bliss in the Apocalypse? Are they not all ethical, a call for a holiness in intention and attainment, and a practice of a brotherly love which is not formal or nominal only, but real? The place that morality holds in the esteem of Christ's apostles is not one whit behind its place in His own.

When we come to look into the substance of the ethical teaching, the content of it, the agreement is again as evident as in the interest. The very words of the Master are reproduced in a way that strikingly contrasts with the supposed indifference of the apostles to the terms of His utterances. James, even before he believed in Him, had eagerly drunk in and pondered long the words of his wonderful Brother, for there is scarcely a paragraph of his Epistle in which the very turn of expression is not reminiscent of Jesus. This, in an Epistle which is simply a strong, pithy exhortation to practical religion from beginning to end, speaks for itself. And it is not difficult from the Epistles of Paul, who probably only became familiar with the utterances of Jesus from the lips of earlier disciples, to draw up a set of most striking parallels, and another of direct appeals, to the words of Christ on the conduct of life. Nowhere is more of this to be found in narrow compass than in the hortatory part of that very Epistle to the Romans which, we are asked to believe, transforms Christ's simple religion into a mere metaphysical theory. That, again, speaks for itself.[1]

But more significant than the identity of language is

[1] Sanday and Headlam, *International Commentary on Romans*, p. 381.

the identity of conception. And here the correspondence comes into strongest relief. What is the subject of Christ's Sermon on the Mount? Without pressing, that Sermon may be said to be constructed on the time-honoured principle of an introduction, three heads, and an application; and the heads are all on righteousness—(1) the essence of righteousness, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. v. 17–48); (2) the inwardness of righteousness, "Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them" (vi. 1–18); (3) the supreme importance of righteousness, "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness" (vi. 19–34). And if you ask what is meant by righteousness, it is not enough to say with Plato, that it is harmonious, orderly action among the different elements of our nature,[1] nor, as the Ritschlian view implies, conformity to, and consistency with, the dictates of our own conscientious convictions, but conscious conformity to what is objectively right, that is, to the law of God's kingdom. It is something not simply moral, but also religious. And the connection between this righteousness and religion is so intimate that Dr. Horton feels himself at liberty to say, "The word righteousness is (here) equivalent to our own word religion."[2] Now this strong emphasis on attention to the fulfilment of our duties to our fellow-men in the right spirit and as a service of God, this postponing of the possibility of acceptable worship to the performance of simple duty to a brother man, is fundamental in Christ's thinking (Matt. v. 23 f., vi. 12, 14 f.; Luke x. 25–37, xi. 4, xiii. 16 ff.). It gives ethics their place in Christian thought and esteem. His disciples all follow suit. James describes religious practice in the "pure religion and undefiled before God

[1] Cf. Shairp's *Studies in Poetry and Philosophy*, p. 339.
[2] *The Commandments of Jesus*, p. 109.

and the Father, which is this, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (Jas. i. 27). Paul tells his readers that faith, knowledge, martyrdom, are worth nothing without charity (1 Cor. xiii. 1–4). And John, with withering scorn, exposes the sanctimonious imposture of the man who says he loves God, and lets his brother go starve of cold and hunger (1 John iii. 16–18). The disciples have the same keen regard for the fulfilment of the duties of man to man as had Christ Himself, and they look at them in exactly the same light.

If, further, the motive of their writings is considered, the link between ethics and religion is seen still more clearly to be as close with them as with Christ. What are these Epistles written for?[1] Why in some are abuses attacked, in others false doctrines checked and exposed, in still others plain, practical points of creed and conduct so insisted on, that the writer, who dares to do it in the Pastoral Epistles, is told that he cannot be the Paul who wrote Galatians and Romans? It is all due to a supreme ethical interest. To say nothing of Corinthians and Thessalonians, it is a fundamental thought in the great doctrinal Epistles of Paul. The doctrines on which he insists are those on which he feels that the characters of men depend. Take Romans. The subject there is the subject of the Sermon on the Mount, righteousness. And righteousness does not mean one thing to Paul, and another to his Master. It is easy enough to run into a mistake of this sort by calling a halt at the end of the fifth chapter. But read on. And why has Paul been at such pains to establish a doctrine of justification?[2] He tells

[1] Shairp, *Studies in Poetry and Philosophy*, pp. 378 ff., 384 ff.

[2] "The doctrine of Justification by Faith belongs to the Ethics of the Christian Religion," J. J. Murphy, *Scientific Basis of Belief*, p. 183. Cf. what Dr. Edward Caird (*Evolution of Religion*, ii. 202) says of the genesis of Paul's views: "It would be truer to say that the ethical principle in St. Paul begat the theological, than that the theological begat the ethical."

us in chaps. vi.–viii., It is in order to make men feel that it is worth their while and within their power to practise righteousness, to do the good they would and resist the evil they would not. What is the secret of his concern about his own countrymen? It is distress at their infatuation in pursuing their own futile efforts to attain this result and rejecting the method put within their reach by God in Christ (chaps. ix.–xi.). And the logic of the position he sums up in a call to those who have the God-given power, to use it in the practice of holy conduct, the lines of which are plain and simple (chaps. xii.–xvi.). The content of righteousness with Paul is just what it was with Jesus. Paul simply from his own experience explained the way he found to it in Christ. If this is so, there is nothing to wonder at in the strong insistence on form and routine in the Epistles to Timothy and to Titus. It is no departure from the earlier reliance on faith alone. It is simply the man getting older. Writing to men who understood him, he could naturally enough refer to the whole Christian teaching as "the doctrine," or "the faith," including in both terms the substance of Christian life and truth. And he was too shrewd a man, of too practical a nature, to allow himself to ignore the value of discipline and routine on character, and of character and conduct as the supreme test of profession. That is where you find him in the Pastoral Epistles. And what can be proved of Paul's Epistles is patent in all the others. Holy character is of supreme importance, and its existence is inseparable from religion.

There is a difference noticeable between Christ and His followers in the sides of duty enforced. There is an elementary character about many of the duties detailed to the Gentiles, that is not found among the counsels to the Jews. Jesus deals more with the under-currents of the moral life, going behind the open, flagrant vices, calling for heart-obedience aback of the outward act, whereas the apostles have

to insist on even such homely commonplaces, as "Husbands, love your wives"; "Children, obey your parents"; "Servants, be obedient unto your own masters." They meet, of course, at many points. Paul, for instance, just as his Master, carries marriage behind the Mosaic Law to the original institution of God in the creation of man. But the reason for what diversity in detail exists, is the fact that Jesus worked among a moral people, the Jews. Outwardly, not one, but many could say of the commandments, "All these have I kept from my youth up." With the Gentiles it was very different. They regarded open neglect of many of these laws as no sin, and had to be told what was right and what wrong. The conditions of life, too, amid the social customs of heathenism and the stress of fanatical hostility, give certain counsels in James, Paul, and John, dictated by the present distress, an air of incipient asceticism, which seems in strong contrast with the genial humanity of the Son of man who came eating and drinking. Yet nothing really goes beyond what Jesus Himself says about men who made themselves eunuchs[1] for the kingdom of God's sake (Matt. xix. 12 f.), or His woe on the rich, who have received their consolation (Luke vi. 24, xvi. 19–31, xviii. 22–25). Weizsäcker, indeed, puts the case for all, when he says of Paul's teachings as to moral duties, "He did not thereby create anything new within Christianity itself. He only as it were translated the teaching of Jesus into the language necessary for promoting the work in this sphere (*i.e.* the Gentile world). By this very means the object of the Founder was fulfilled."[2]

In effect, Jesus and His disciples reaffirm the law. To justify this statement it is necessary to examine the relation of Jesus and His followers to the Jewish law,—a question which has called into existence a whole literature of its own, and which is involved in a good deal of confusion from

[1] That is, refrained from marriage. I do not think it means more.

[2] *Apostolic Age*, ii. 373.

failure to observe the different points of view from which it was regarded at different times. A distinction, which is obvious, is that between the law as a means of salvation, and the law as an expression of the divine will and standard of human conduct. Now, whatever room there may be for discussion as to the relative attitude of Christ and His several followers on the former point, there should be no difference of opinion as to the latter. Over and over again Christ reaffirms the law. Paul, even when repudiating it, at times even sarcastically,[1] as a means of salvation, is eager to vindicate its high ethical value and its true character as "holy, and just, and good"[2] (Rom. vii. 14 ff.). In its great moral pronouncements, all endorse it. If they have any occasion to criticise, it is not its fundamental principles, but modifications, introduced to meet passing phases of moral development (cf. Matt. xix. 8; Mark x. 5). It may be said that such endorsement goes very much farther, and includes approval of the ritual and ceremonial parts as well as of the moral sections, for the distinction of moral and ritual was not present to the Jewish mind. And it is perfectly true that the distinction is never made in so many words. Yet Jesus draws a very sharp line between the tithing of mint and anise and cummin, and the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, faith (Matt. xxiii. 23). Though it is going too far, with Dr. Lyman Abbott, to say, "so far as we know, Jesus never offered a sacrifice Himself," for by His appearance at Jerusalem at the stated feasts and His share in the Passover supper, He was act and part in the offering of Jewish sacrifices, still, what he adds is, in the main, true: "He disregarded . . . the Levitical system."[3] Any deference He showed to rites and ceremonies was only in keeping with the spirit of His parable

[1] Denney, *2 Corinthians* iii. 12–end.

[2] Harper (*Deuteronomy*, p. 251) brings out Paul's attitude towards the law well by a comparison of Galatians and Romans.

[3] Lyman Abbott, *Life and Letters of Paul the Apostle*, p. 321.

of the New Wine and the Old Bottles (Matt. ix. 17; Mark ii. 21 f.; Luke v. 36, 37), and with His whole conception of the fulfilment of the law. Not one jot or tittle of the law was to fail, till it was fulfilled,—fulfilled in its own appropriate way (Matt. v. 17 ff.). When He speaks to that effect, Jesus shows His fine sense of the difference between the impatience of a revolutionary and the faith that can bear with decaying forms, awaiting the day when they shall of themselves fall away, and the good they enfolded be carried over, intact, into a new *régime*. How little what we call ceremonial counted with Christ's disciples is seen in the silence of such a conservative as James, who must have seen cherished rites falling into abeyance, and yet passes it without a hint of protest; in the whole tenor of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which but aims at dispelling the concern of whilom Jews, living when Jewish ritual was on the point of becoming a thing of the past; and, perhaps above all, in the polemic of Paul against the law as a means of salvation. It would not have surprised us if, in his assault on the law, Paul had attacked the ceremonies, and, like the writer in Hebrews, shown their inadequacy. But, except the rite of circumcision, he practically never mentions them, unless in a mere allusion to apply their symbolism to Christ; while what he does specify as ineffective, futile, are the moral injunctions, the law as a standard of life, and as such lacking vital force and energy. Why this silence about so vulnerable a side of it as the ceremonial? Why, but because of its essential insignificance as a factor in the law, effete, gone without saying, in very marked contrast with the persistent importance, challenging a verdict, of the moral code. With this body of evidence before us, it is reasonable to regard our distinction of moral and ceremonial as in effect recognised by the apostles and Christ, and with it the tacit setting aside of the ceremonial, and only a call left for adjusting relations with the moral law.

As has been said, the relation to the moral law, which persists, is the recognition of it as a standard of righteousness. And yet that is not all. The law has to be carried deeper. It is the old law, but it is the old law read, not simply according to the letter and as a canon of outward observance, but as the rule of inward affection; not simply as a strong, restraining rein on all refractoriness and excess, but an imperious "thou shalt not," imposed to find place for a still more masterful and unhesitating "thou shalt." And the result is a great transformation, in virtue of which morality, in the thought of Christ and of all who think with Him, passes from an affair of the letter to an affair of the spirit; from precept to principle or motive power; from a routine to a life. What Christ taught by His word, He effected by His life and death, and in their own experience of these effects His followers find material for enforcing its profoundest lesson.

There remains, then, a law or canon as to what is the life proper to men living as members of society, reconstituted in Christ; and this canon has its authority in the will of God, indeed is identical with it. It is restated in the living example of Jesus Christ. But one of the most striking notes of distinctively Christian teaching in Ethics is the resolution of all law into a single principle, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." So Christ stated, and so Paul argues in the very spirit of his Master. "Owe no man anything, but to love one another. . . . It (the law) is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 8–10). If we turn to 1 Cor. xiii. 4–7, the activities of love described there show that all the virtues, natural and Christian, are but various expressions of the single principle, love. All the forgotten virtues, which Christ brought into the foreground, have the same common trait. When apostles enforce them,

they appeal to the pattern of Christ, who embodied them, and who sums up the commandments in His own example, "This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John xv. 12). This is the new old command, which John repeats (1 John ii. 7 ff.). Sometimes when we hear them speaking thus, resolving laws into love, we are tempted to think them therefore less imperative. But no. Love is law, an imperious law, a law which has its seat in the nature and will of God (1 John iii. 17, iv. 8, 20, 21, v. 1). Christ is quick to challenge a mere lip profession: "Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke vi. 46; cf. Matt. vii. 22 f.). He speaks for His Father and as the coming Judge, and He asserts His authority. Men must answer for their treatment of His will and law. Paul, even when insisting on his liberty, never for a moment hints at anything but being under law to Christ (1 Cor. ix. 21). But seen as love, the will, the law, of God for man is known for no arbitrary enactment of divine caprice. It is the statement of the essential condition, as understood by the all-wise heavenly Father, under which man's nature can attain its full stature, and has its counterpart in the ruling features of His own nature, to which His children should correspond (Matt. v. 43–48).

The question has been raised as to whether there is complete agreement here between Jesus and Paul and John. Do they agree as to the range of this love? And, curiously enough, the one on whom suspicion has fallen is John, the so-called Apostle of Love. It has been argued, as a corollary from his supposed limited conception of the range of God's love (see previous chapter), that love with him, between man and man, is limited to the brethren; that he has not grasped, as Paul did, the significance of Christ's command, "Love your enemies," or the prayer on the Cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Now we have seen that there is no good ground for accept-

ing the main contention. And with its rejection goes the superstructure. It is true that John emphasises the duty of love with marked reference to the brethren. But it is in antithesis to a professed love to God which has no counterpart or issue in love to man, not even to a Christian brother. And yet it is questionable if, where John uses "brother" in the singular in his Epistle, iii. 17, iv. 20, v. 16, and especially in the two latter passages, we have any right to take it as meaning Christian brother, and not brother by birth, be he Christian or no. The illustrative instance quoted is Cain and Abel; and that leaves the impression that ties of nature, and not of grace, are intended, and with that all suggestion of limit on the range of the law of love in John disappears. This law of love is the law for action towards all mankind. "Do unto others," without distinction, "as you would that they should do unto you (Matt. vii. 12; Luke vi. 31). Anticipate, that is, and so conciliate the great natural instinct of retaliation. By love everywhere win love in return, and so establish the reign of love.

But love is still more than law in Christian ethics. With such a law it is not difficult to understand what is meant, when we say that with Christ morality is transformed from a routine to a life. It means that righteousness is not attained in unfailing conformity to prescribed details, the letter of a law, even if that law be love, but by a spontaneous and constant application of an inner, vital principle. Dr. John Brown's quaint conceit that "love is the inflected perfect tense of life (I have given = I gave; I have lived = I love)," suggests the extent of the change, when love becomes the law of life. As Bovon says, "La vie, c'est l'amour." That is true of the moral life of the Christian. It ceases to be a thing of prescriptions, refuses to crystallise into definitions, is more easily suggested in a parable, like that of the Good Samaritan, or in an invitation, "Go, sell all that thou hast; and come, take up thy cross, and follow Me," than in an

abstract statement. It is a thing of the spirit, not of the letter. That does not imply that its demands are less stringent than those of the letter. It means they are more so, apply in a thousand cases where the letter is dumb. But it means that the heart of the Christian becomes so full of "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" that it habitually obeys its dictates, and shows its fruits in actions "against which there is no law." And it is when the life and the law have become one in love that the liberty of the sons of God is reached, in which they can walk unhampered, either by what John calls the "fear" that "hath torment" (1 John iv. 18), or by the uneasy conscience which calls out Paul's warning, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. xiv. 23).

When the secret of this life of love is explored, its vital energy, its "dynamic," as Principal Shairp calls it,[1]—and in its power to supply this he finds the crowning excellence of Christian ethics,—is found in the love of God to us. And here, just as strongly as in the matter of the authority of the law of love as God's law, perhaps even more strongly, does the inseparable connection between ethics and religion in the thought of Christ and His disciples appear. God's forgiveness, God's mercy,—the forms which love takes towards sinners,—are not simply the measure, they are the motive, of love. Christ expects this response (Matt. vi. 14 f.), and He has no toleration for a merciless servant, who has no appreciation of the remission of his own debt (Matt. xviii. 21 ff.). It is against nature to be otherwise. "To whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much" (Luke vii. 37, 50). Paul responded to that, "The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge," etc. (2 Cor. v. 14, 15). There he is describing the secret of his life's activity. It has the same root as his fortitude amid trials. "We glory in tribulation, . . . because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts"

[1] *Studies in Poetry and Philosophy*, iv.

(Rom. v. 3 ff.), and what that love is, the next sentence tells: "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." John goes deeper still. A careful study of what he means by love, the love that is the prevailing feature of a Christian character, gives this result. It is not so much the love of the man himself, as God's love streaming into his heart and overflowing towards other men. What else is the meaning of the argument in 1 John iv. 12–19; cf. ii. 16, iv. 10? How else would our love for others prove the indwelling of God? Why otherwise should the result be inevitable? "We love (not him, but fellow-men, for that is the matter in discussion) because He first loved us." It all tells that the springs of Christian character are in its religion, in the heart of its God.

This explains the place that faith has in the Christian life. A discussion of faith in its saving aspects must be reserved meanwhile. But its place as a ruling principle in shaping the conduct of Christian lives is due to the essentially religious conception of life with Christ and His apostles. If the exhibition of love is the manifestation of life, faith in God is its inspiration. Faith in God is our truest response to His love for us. There is in the New Testament a stronger demand for faith in Him than for love to Him, both with Christ and His apostles. As Ritschl says, "There is a measure of reserve in the call for love to God; there is no reserve in the call to faith."[1] Why that should be is plain from John's criticism of professed lovers of God. It is so easy to profess love to God, so difficult to test it directly (1 John iv. 20, 21). With faith it is the reverse. The test can be applied at once. It is seen in a man's life, whether he trusts God or not. And it is partly the strong practical sense of Christ and His apostles that puts faith in the foreground. But that is not all. Where it exists, a man can do anything. He can remove moun-

[1] *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, ii. 100.

tains (Matt. xvii. 20, 21), not necessarily as by some magic touch, but by tackling in God's name with dogged determination the most stupendous tasks. He can even forgive a penitent brother seven times a day, for the sense of the spiritual strain here involved immediately suggested to the disciples the prayer, Lord, increase our faith; or if the events narrated together were not in immediate sequence, yet Luke's placing of them side by side shows that he felt that after a call to such forgiveness, it was well to remind his readers of what Jesus had said of the power of faith, by recording here this word about it (Luke xvii. 1–6). Faith in God, the living spring of Christ's own marvellous life,—Hebrews calls Him "the Author and Finisher, or Captain and Perfecter, of Faith" (xii. 2),—of His miracles, spiritual endurance, passion, and triumph, needs no other testimony from Him to His conception of its ethical value. Paul learnt the secret from Jesus, and he brings the matter to an issue in his great dictum as to its exclusive worth. It is all that matters—faith, "faith that worketh by love" (Gal. v. 6). Were it not for the reference, one might think that these were words of James, so cognate are they to his views. "I will show thee my faith by my works" (Jas. ii. 18). Hebrews gives the roll of spiritual heroes in a procession of past masters in the school of faith (Heb. xi.); and John, when once he has established the place of love, immediately turns to find the secret of the success and power in its roots in faith. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith" (1 John v. 1–5).

What follows this in John's Epistle shows the close connection of faith and prayer, which is the habitual and powerful exercise of the Christian life, and the connection brings the last of the apostolic teachers into close touch with its pioneers, James and Peter (1 John v. 16, 17; Jas. v. 14–20; 1 Pet. iv. 7, 8). Each indicates its prevailing power with God for the pardon of sin. That again accords

with the whole teaching of Christ on the subject, which is as forcibly given by His example as in His precepts. There is not a situation in life in which He does not betake Himself to it. It is His constant resource for refreshing and strength, for spiritual calm and intrepidity in encounter with man or devil. And He is at pains to instruct His disciples in the whole subject. What to pray for, how to pray, and why, He tells it all. And there is not a shade of difference between Master and scholar as to the priceless value of this privilege of prayer. If love and faith are there, love to man and faith in God, prayer is inevitable.

Love as the commonly recognised fundamental law of the Christian life makes it perfectly plain, that the result contemplated by Christ in His redemptive work is essentially social.[1] What He is aiming at is not realised in the restoral of a multitude of isolated individuals to moral health, who, like patients healed, leave a physician without any tie to bind them to others who have passed through His hands. His aim is the re-establishment of them in a society in which not only are all alive to their duties to Him, but also for His sake to one another, and are conscious of an abiding defect in themselves, so long as any of their fellows are not also alive to, and in active discharge of, their respective obligations to their God and to their fellow-men. True, the shepherd leaves the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and goes after the one which was lost. But does that mean that the one is the all-important factor, not the many? No. It means that the flock, which is all-important, is incomplete so long as that one is away. And sympathy like His own with the multitude, scattered like sheep that had no shepherd, Christ eagerly sought, and with success, to awaken in the hearts of His disciples (Matt. ix. 36–x. 6).[2]

[1] H. J. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 390 f.

[2] Cf. Luke x. 2, 3: the men He has first asked to pray are those whom immediately He sends. "Pray ye . . . Go your ways; I send you."

When we say that the Christian view of life is distinctly social, we do not mean simply that it recognises the social relations of men, the ties of family, commerce, state, that its principles are to permeate all of these, and that no man is living the Christian life, if the principle of holy love is not dominant in each of these spheres. That is true. Such social aspects of Christianity are obvious. Why else have we Jesus so interested in the integrity of the marriage tie, prepared to uphold the authority of the state, even of an alien state, emphatic in His verdicts on commercial dishonesty and the abuse of the sacred trust of riches? Why else do James and Paul follow so closely in His footsteps? And if, amid the outbreak of persecution by the government, though Peter indeed can still say, "Honour the king," the Apocalypse throbs with scarce suppressed holy ire against the abuses of power, it is not in any anarchic spirit it finds relief, as if the states of earth were all inherently evil. It is in the prospect of the consummation, when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." But this brings out what is primarily meant, when we say the Christian ideal is social. It means that, in virtue of Christ's work, a new tie links man to man in an intimacy of relationship which supersedes every other. As soon as Christ appeared, in His person the magnetic force was introduced into the midst of the human race. And as soon as men began to gather around Him, imbibe His ideas, cherish His feelings towards their fellows, live on those terms of disinterested affection for which He called, the result He sought could be described as in some measure attained. It might still be but a little flock around their shepherd, but it is the Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom.[1]

[1] "Salvation brings to the City of God, to a fellowship of saints, to a social life of mutual intercourse and help. To find our happiness in the welfare of

What is involved in this will become plain, as we now proceed to consider the variety of terms employed to describe this religio-ethical ideal, in which the salvation for which Christ worked is realised. Thus it is called the Kingdom of God (of heaven), the Church, Eternal Life, an Inheritance ; its possessors are Covenant people, Holy Brethren, Sons of God, and so on. These are various terms for the same glorious conception. But it is necessary to show that this is so, and why the variety exists ; for many hold that these different terms represent radically different conceptions of the Christian ideal and speak, not only of divergence of view among the followers of Christ, but serious deviation on their part from the Master's fundamental idea.

To commence with what is admittedly one of Christ's favourite phrases, the Kingdom of God. This phrase was constantly on the lips of Christ, particularly during the early section of His ministry, and in public utterance even to the end, though not in private colloquy with His disciples. It was used by Him as a summary for what He taught Himself, and what He commissioned His messengers to preach. The Synoptic writers use it in exactly the same way. And Luke employs it in the Acts to express the substance of even Paul's preaching, and curiously enough he does not use it in the same way of the preaching of the other apostles. On the other hand, the phrase is seldom used by the other writers, and again curiously those who heard it so often on the lips of Christ use it with less frequency than does Paul. But wherever it is used, the use raises the same questions as it does when on the lips of Christ.

The phrase has a variety of forms, most prominent of

others, for the sake of Jesus Christ, is of the essence of religion, is a condition of the dwelling in Mount Sion." Andrew Murray, *The Holiest of All*, p. 512, in summary of comment on Heb. xii. 22–24.

which are the two, 'Kingdom of Heaven,' peculiar to Matthew, and 'Kingdom of God.' The latter is sometimes put into Christ's lips by Matthew, as well as kingdom of heaven, so that in his Gospel both are found. Which, then, is Christ's own usage? Probably the double use in Matthew represents the fact; Christ used both. Why, then, have Mark and Luke preserved only the one? Because to all intents and purposes they both mean the same thing; but among the Greeks, in whose midst their Gospels were intended to circulate, heaven or the heavens suggested Olympus, a court of gods and goddesses; and to avoid such misleading associations they confined themselves to the simple phrase, kingdom of God. What supports this view is that there does not seem to be any important principle underlying the use of the one or the other in Matthew. Literary taste settles the use. In the vagueness of an introduction to a parable, we constantly find 'the kingdom of heaven.' So also the 'gates of hell' is followed by the 'kingdom of heaven.' But where the personality of the king has already been emphasised, there, as might have been expected, kingdom of God occurs. After the contrast between God and mammon, and the dissuasive from care for merely earthly concerns we read, "seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness"; and a sense of aphoristic force approves the form. So again in xii. 28, where the contrast between Satan and the Spirit of God is pronounced, we expect and we find the form, the kingdom of God; and in the parables in xxi. 28 ff., where the will of God is in marked evidence, we read 'God' and not 'heaven.' If any emphasis is to be laid on the distinction of terms—and while I have said that they are practically identical, I do not accept Schürer's explanation, that heaven was simply a Jewish periphrasis for God; it is the total phrases, kingdom of heaven, and kingdom of God, which I regard as identical in signification—the idea in

kingdom of heaven is this. Heaven is the sphere in which the kingdom of God exists in perfection. There God's will is done. And if the exegesis is correct which regards the phrase, "as in heaven, so on earth," in the Lord's Prayer, as referring to all the three preceding petitions, then what is implied by the kingdom of heaven becomes quite clear. "Thy kingdom come . . . as in heaven, so on earth." That is, let the perfect relationship which exists between the Lord, the Father, who hath His throne in the heavens, and His subjects there, have its counterpart on earth in the relations between God, the Father, and His children here. In a reign of God, acknowledged among men, there is a kingdom of heaven upon earth.

When Christ commenced to use this phrase, He never thought it necessary to give a definition of it. The reason for that is obvious. It was a current popular phrase, which, in a broad, general way, expressed the great hope of Israel, the condition of things in which Israel was to attain and enjoy its highest good. The phrase, as such, is not found, though it is implied, in the Old Testament. It is not common in either the Rabbinical or Apocalyptic writings. But there are many passages in the Psalms, in the Prophets, and especially in Daniel, which naturally account for its existence in the popular speech. Indeed, prevalent opinion in our Lord's day was that Israel's earliest constitution was that of a holy nation in covenant with God as His people, and He alone their King. The first demand for a human king had appeared to its saintliest leader as almost an apostasy. This had only been escaped by the gracious condescension of God and the restriction of the office to a divinely-approved person, who should hold his office in trust for God. The effort of the exiles, returned from Babylon, had been meantime to revert to the original type, and according to their lights establish a theocracy, and await the fulfilment of the Messianic hope

of the people, which was for the re-establishment of the kingdom under a second God-given David, a son of David.[1] With much of the idea which resulted from this Jesus had no fault to find, and He was content to accept it. It was not necessary for Him to emphasise in it the idea of community, the social element. That was there already. He had simply to indicate its scope, show whom it embraced, who belonged to it, and to whom it belonged. It was not necessary to insist that it should have a place on earth. That was expected, indeed too exclusively contemplated, by His contemporaries, and required a corrective. It was not necessary to emphasise the glory of the kingdom. Every Israelite who expected to share in it was quite sufficiently engrossed in that, was persuaded that its outward magnificence and the distinction that would accrue to its hereditary subjects would utterly eclipse all rivals. What did require emphasis was that it was God's kingdom, different in kind from all earthly kingdoms, a kingdom of the Spirit, a kingdom of truth, existing, spreading, and manifesting itself in spiritual facts and by spiritual forces, never challenging comparison with earthly realms. These are "the mysteries of the kingdom"—the elements, *i.e.* only to be learnt under instruction by the Revealer—which, in one parable after another, were revealed to the chosen disciples who were educated enough in the kingdom to understand all the parables in the light of the key supplied to two of them (Matt. xiii. 10–23, 36–43). And the result of these explanations is that the kingdom of God, in its spirituality and universality, is discovered to be far more unlike than like any earthly kingdom, and we are not surprised that the phrase gradually dropped out of use to give place to others, better suited to express the reality as it actually appeared. In other words, the kingdom of God was a current phrase for

[1] Cf. the cry of the throng at Christ's entry into Jerusalem (Mark xi. 9).

the vague desires which Christ came to satisfy in so far as they were worthy. It was a very suggestive figure of speech, conserving the important points of a community of subjects, living under mutual obligations, in view of their common obligation to their ruler, who is their God. And Christ adopted it all the more readily because it was in current use. But it is not the master thought in Christ's mind. As Dr. Kidd shows in his very thorough discussion of the point, it is only by using "kingdom of God" in a very lax way, and by fitting into it numerous ideas that have no cognate affinity with the idea of king or kingdom, that it can be made to appear as a chief category in Christ's thought. If it is otherwise, it is strange that Christ never calls the ruler of the kingdom, king, nor its members, subjects or citizens. Even in the parables used to illustrate the kingdom, He only rarely employs the figure of earthly kings and their subjects. Where he does, it is just as often as not in other than strictly kingly functions He places them. Kingdom of God is only one phrase among many in the vocabulary which He used to convey His great ideas to His fellow-men.[1]

It need not surprise us that it disappeared so largely from the vocabulary of the Early Church, when it is noted, (*a*) that even in Christ's use of it there is a gradual recession, and (*b*) that Christ supplies its place with other terms of a totally different complexion. As to the gradual passage of the phrase into the background, that is most strikingly suggested by its almost total absence from the Gospel of John, which is admittedly more occupied with the later than with the earlier teaching of Jesus. This shows, too, that it disappeared more quickly from His words to His disciples, which also preponderate in John, than from His public utterances. In Luke, it is true, it

[1] For a very thorough discussion of the point, see Dr. Kidd's Kerr Lecture, *Morality and Religion*, Lect. VIII. The Kingdom of God.

reappears with its early frequency towards the end, in the Jerusalem journey (ix. 51–xviii. 19). But there, as we have seen, Jesus was toward the end of His ministry opening up new ground, and hence, as was to be expected, reverting to much of His preliminary teaching. But where Jesus had already expressly attached all that was essentially true in the phrase, it was passing away in parabolic, dissolving views. The reason is not far to seek.[1] There was not the same necessity to present the kingdom, when He had begun to bring into the foreground the person of the King, Himself, the Christ. What Weizsäcker says of the course of Paul's teaching, occurs in the course of the teaching of Christ Himself: "The kingdom of God is, as it were, merged into the doctrine of the Christ."[2] As the Christ therefore came into prominence, the need to enlarge on the kingdom vanished. And what Jesus felt, the writers of the New Testament felt still more, and especially when urged by prudential motives on coming into contact with the civil authorities throughout the Roman Empire. Having no wish to provoke unnecessary hostility, and being anxious to gain adherents, they dropped a compromising word, *βασιλεία*, *regnum*, a term, like *rex*, hateful and suspicious to a Roman ear,[3] which, in itself, had served its purpose and was non-essential, and from which, in other terms, they preserved all that was important. In this they simply followed the example of Christ. When questioned by

[1] It is important to note that the kingdom of God is the Messianic kingdom, according to Christ's teaching. In the explanation of the parable of the Tares, Jesus passes quite naturally from speaking of the kingdom of the Son of man to speak of it as the kingdom of the heavenly Father. And generally the kingdom of God is the kingdom which Jesus introduces, which He claims as His kingdom, and teaches His disciples to pray about as the kingdom of the Father in heaven.

[2] *Apostolic Age*, i. 141.

[3] Horton (*The Teaching of Jesus*, p. 220) remarks: "Kingdom of God was not a suitable term for the world at large." *Χριστός*, which was adopted untranslated into Latin speech, apparently had no kingly associations in ordinary Greek, and suggested none *per se* to an uninitiated Roman.

Pilate, Christ admits He is a king, but explains that His kingdom is not of this world; and then as He continues, when you expect Him to say something further about His kingdom, He substitutes "the truth" (John xviii. 33–38). Similarly, in Matt. xviii. Jesus passes with perfect naturalness, in speaking of the blessings He has come to bestow and the relations under which they are to be enjoyed, from the idea of the kingdom to that of life, and then to the family relationship. On the other hand, in the following chapters, xix. 16–xx. 16, commencing with the inquirer's term, "eternal life," Jesus uses, in turn, in converse with him and with His disciples, kingdom and salvation as its equivalents; and, apparently, no feeling of incongruity is excited in the minds of any of them by these transitions. They are accepted as terms germane to the one grand subject, well understood by all, suggestive of various aspects of it, and each appropriate in its turn, yet none of them comprehensive enough to say all. Jesus was not anxious about a name. He was only anxious about the living reality. And He left the society He founded to discover what phrase would, from time to time, best explain the institution to its contemporaries.

When the ministry of Christ was over, and the little community which He had gathered began to acquire an independent existence with a certain sense of corporate unity and with a set of men entrusted with the management of its affairs, it became conscious that it did require a name for itself. It was not enough for the members to call themselves the disciples, the brethren, the believers. There was nothing definite about that, nothing sufficiently comprehensive or characteristic. The community was still too modest to call itself the kingdom of God. Not that it did not regard itself as in some measure a realisation of Christ's ideal. But, apart from other considerations already adduced, it felt that it would misrepresent to the world the

magnificence of that conception, if it assumed that as a name. Still it was not easy to pitch on an appropriate term. There was so much that they were anxious to conserve and to express. And nothing is quite so suggestive of their perplexity as a paragraph in First Peter (ii. 1–9), where he throws out in rapid succession one term after another in an attempt by the combined effect to suggest what he felt ought to be said in a proper description of the Christian community. He says they are "newborn babes"; "living stones, built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood"; "an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people for God's own possession." These terms are all culled from the Old Testament.[1] They all have expressions closely resembling them in the various New Testament books. And there are still others such as, "the flock of God," "the Holy City, the New Jerusalem," a favourite in Revelations, while in Hebrews the old Covenant idea presses for expression. Any name, therefore, to be adequate must suggest as many as possible of the points indicated. It must express the claim of the Christian community to preserve the true continuity of the Covenant people of God. It must express its own conviction, that its members are no heterogeneous amalgamation of units, but a corporation with a constitution, and with solemn mutual obligations and privileges. And it must bring all this into unique touch with Christ.

In the vocabulary of Christ the word to express this was lying ready to their hand, the word ἐκκλησία, Church. This was a term in current use, without religious associations, among the Greeks, to describe a convoked assembly of a community (cf. Acts xix. 32, 39, 41). It passed into the Greek version of the Old Testament (cf. Acts vii. 38) as one of the terms used to describe the community of the

[1] For the O.T. parallels and sources see Deut. x. 15; Ex. xix. 5, 6; Deut. vii. 6; Isa. xxviii. 16; Ps. cxviii. 22; Hos. i. 6, 9, 10, ii. 23.

people of God. The other term was *συναγωγή*. In the latter the idea of community predominates over assembly, but it had already been identified with the Jewish nation and their religious pretensions. When Christ, therefore, was selecting a word to describe the community which He had founded, and for which He claimed the legitimate succession as God's people, He appropriated the other term, *ἐκκλησία*, and so prepared it for the use of His people to describe the community, collectively regarded, of those who adhered to Him and in Him to the God of faithful Israel. The word, it is true, is used by Him on but two occasions. There are no grounds, however, other than the exigencies of theory, for doubting the genuineness of the passages which report them. They occur only in Matthew. They are omitted in parallel passages in Mark and Luke, but in Luke there are further omissions in this connection of what occurs in Mark as well as in Matthew. And so one hesitates to attach to their common silence any significance hostile to the genuineness of the passages in Matthew. In the words themselves there is nothing inherently suspicious. In profane Greek *ἐκκλησία* was sometimes used of the place of assembly. The Old Testament community, the ecclesia of Israel, was the house of Israel. Why should it surprise us, then, that Jesus, having elicited from His disciples the confession which differentiated men who adhered to Him as Messiah from the rest of Israel and supplied Him with the nucleus for the formation of the new true house of Israel, should play on Peter's name and say, "On this rock will I build My ecclesia (Church)," [1] that is to say, the community, which is to be My house, which gathers, in response to My summons, to form the new covenant people with God, and to

[1] As Ἐκκλησία means both community and the building where a community meets (see Cremer, *Lexicon of New Testament Greek, sub voce*, though he sets aside the inference which I am drawing), this passage would afford the natural source for all those expressions for the Christian community, borrowed from the figure of a building.

which shall be transferred all the stability and privileges of Israel? The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. It shall have charge of the keys that unlock the gate of the kingdom of heaven, with which it thus is seen to stand in closest conjunction (Matt. xvi. 13–20). Dr. Hort, in his monograph on the Christian Ecclesia, to which I confess deep obligations, takes ἐκκλησία in the other passage, "tell it to the Church" (Matt. xviii. 17), as equivalent to "the Jewish local community to which the injured person and the offender both belonged,"[1] though he admits, of course, that the principle stated holds good for all time, *i.e.* for Christian communities also. With this I cannot agree. His reason is that otherwise it would hardly be intelligible to his hearers. But Jesus had already spoken of His Church. This incident is the later of the two. In the immediate sequel to this second utterance He repeats the commission of authority which He had first given on the previous reference to the Church, and He follows it up by declaring that He would Himself be spiritually present in the midst of gatherings of His people, as if to explain the tremendous prerogative which He had now assigned to them. All of this surely suggests that by the Church something else is meant than Jewish gatherings, where Jesus was by this time a person suspect. Rather He took it for granted that His disciples would at once understand His meaning from His previous statement. Or, what is even more likely, as He uses "Church" in each case without explanation, He felt no explanation necessary, but regarded the application of the word to the community He was already gathering round Himself as perfectly obvious.

Why, then, was not this word at once adopted to describe the Christian community? A study of the phrase, as used in the Acts of the Apostles, suggests that at first it was. No doubt was felt as to its appropriateness, so

[1] Cf. Bruder, *Concordance*, *sub voce*.

long as the Christian community was practically confined to a single locality, Jerusalem, where it could actually form a single assembly. But when the members were scattered, and little companies gathered in different places, a certain perplexity arose as to what was entitled to be called the Church, and it was tacitly settled by retaining the name for the main parent community which continued at Jerusalem and met there. The reading of the best manuscripts in Acts ix. 31, ἡ ἐκκλησία, suggests a glimmer of understanding of the possibility of the use of the term for a comprehensive inclusion of all communities under one name, the Church. But it disappeared. And amid the friction of party that soon ensued there was danger of the more serious loss of the consciousness of the fact of unity, as well as of the word to express it. After this, in Paul's earlier Epistles, and in the Apocalypse, "Church" is used, not for a unity, but to describe the separate assemblies in different localities, of which there might be more than one in the same town. Indeed, to judge by 2 Cor. i. 1, for a time its sense seems to have become so limited that isolated saints, living beyond the reach of the meetings of the central community, were scarcely regarded as parts of the Church, and therefore are mentioned separately. In the Apocalypse, too, which represents a type of feeling which survived in Jewish quarters after it was left behind in Gentile circles, John, anxious for a term by which to describe the whole Christian community, has to content himself with the symbolic method of selecting *seven* Churches, *i.e.* the perfect number, and use this to express the Church as a whole.[1]

But that is not the last word about "Church" in New Testament. The word was wanted for something grander, and at last there flashed upon Paul's mind the full significance of what Jesus had said. Paul had often tried to

[1] Milligan, *Expositor's Bible*, "Revelation," p. 27 ff.

impress upon the separate communities the intensely close bond of unity that linked them together.[1] He rang the changes on the fact that they were a building of God, built by God on the foundation-stone of Christ, and on Him of the apostles, every heart a shrine, every community a temple for the indwelling of God. Still more elaborately, under the figure of the body, he pressed home upon the Corinthians their unity and the duty of mutual ministry, and he repeated the figure when he was writing to Rome (1 Cor. xii. 12–14; Rom. xii. 4, 5). But when he reached Rome, the figure assumed a new significance for him. He fell under the spell of the city. He was impressed by the imposing grandeur of the world-embracing unity of the Roman polity. He had always prized its citizenship. It had stood him in good stead at many a critical juncture. At last he was there within its walls, to stand his trial at Cæsar's judgment bar, because he was "free-born." And if he does not, with John in the Revelation, see the Christian community as a nobler city still, yet in his letter to the Philippians, colonists and therefore citizens themselves, men among whom he had successfully asserted his own citizen rights (Acts xvi. 35–39), the thought flashes out that all Christians are members of one mighty state: "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. iii. 20). And turning to write to the Ephesians, with the strife between Jew and Gentile a thing of the past, and the two reconciled in Christ, the unity of the members of this spiritual community, more marvellous in its rights and privileges than Rome, overpowers him. The old figure of the body returns with a new vividness. It is used with a daring on which he had not hitherto ventured. It is not simply the members of whom he now speaks. Christ is included. All in union with Him are with Him but one body, of which He is the Head, from

[1] Among other methods, his great collection for the saints was a practical effort in this direction.

whom all the body is fitly framed and knit together by that which every joint supplies. If Christ is indispensable to their life and existence, they are indispensable to Him.[1] It is thus the measure of the stature of a perfect man in Christ is reached (Eph. iv. 1–16). It is this body which is the fulness (or the fulfilment, or complement, *i.e.* completement) of Him who filleth all in all (Eph. i. 23). And as this magnificent conception of the organic unity, that embraces all the communities of those who believe in Christ, strikes him, he sees that nothing less than this was what Christ had long ago spoken of, when He foretold a glorious structure which He should build, and which He called His Church. So he recovers Christ's own conception of the Church, viz. the Christian community as one great living unity in closest contact with Christ Himself (Eph. i. 22).

It is necessary to remember, however, what were regarded as the functions of the Church, and that what is stated as true of the separate Churches is not less but more true of the comprehensive whole. It is no merely devotional organisation to maintain the observance of certain rites and ceremonies of worship. These have a place, and an important place, in the life of the Church. But, in truth, there is no domain of human interest or duty, no human relationship which does not come directly within the sweep of the Church's influence. Membership in the Church becomes regulative of all relationships. A place in this community determines action in every sphere. The intimacy of the membership, the duties of its officers, the motive and actions of its Founder and Head, alike attest this. And with this in our mind, there is little difficulty in recognising how close is the connection between the Church and the kingdom of God. On their ideal side, and in so far as they express the thought of the community,

[1] Cf. E. B. Browning, *Aurora Leigh*, p. 217: "This head has all the people for a heart."

they are identical. Where they diverge is in the fact that on Christ's lips in kingdom the emphasis is thrown on King and Constitution, in Church it is on the community in which the King's writ runs. In the Church the kingdom finds an embodiment of itself ever more complete as the community grows, and at the same time an instrument for its own extension. The perfection of each depends on the perfect realisation of the other. That the one should have largely given place to the other in the speech of the community, is not surprising, when what has been already mentioned, as to the politically compromising element in the term kingdom, is borne in mind. In Church, ἐκκλησία, on the other hand, there was a term, free from these elements, and as suggestive to the man familiar with the Old Testament of the relation of the Christian community to God as the word kingdom.[1] Church for such a man placed the Christian community in the position of Israel as the covenant people of God. To the Greek, as well as to the man initiated in Jewish literature, it suggested a community with a constitution and times of public meeting for its proper business. And to both alike, when they heard that Christ had used it to describe the society He had founded among men, it would take on a sacred complexion, which would give it the same exclusive significance, as was similarly acquired by the name Jesus, or the title Christ. If, in our day, there has been an enthusiastic turning from Church to kingdom, and that as the counterpart of a supposed rediscovery, that Christianity is a social institution, and not a pathway for solitaries, that is not due to any defect in the significance of the name originally selected by Christ and generally adopted by His followers. It is due to the abuse and restriction of its meaning. And the true significance of the reassertion of the kingdom is

[1] The perusal of the first three verses of Deut. xxiii. in the Septuagint will make this immediately apparent, and there are scores of parallels.

that it is a great recall of the Church to its own true Christ-given dignity, when He called it His Ecclesia, God's one great society. It is the repetition in another form of the achievement of Paul in the Epistle to the Ephesians.

A third outstanding term which is used to describe the ideal for which Christ worked, and which, in John's Gospel, appears as constantly on the lips of Christ as does kingdom in the Synoptics, is Life, Eternal Life. When we have noted that John's Gospel deals more with individuals than do the Synoptics,—*e.g.* personal interviews have a place in it, with which there is little to compare in the others,—we can understand why this term Life should come specially to the front here. Its use, however, is not confined to the Gospel of John, nor there to Christ. It is as common with John himself, not less so with Paul; and James and Peter also use it. And they all use it in the same sense.

It is well to observe how closely it is related to the conception which Christ expressed by kingdom. This is seen in the easy transition from the one to the other, which we have already noticed in the Synoptics. Then, again, the conditions of inheriting life are identical with those of entering the kingdom, as a comparison of the interview with Nicodemus with that with the rich young ruler shows (John iii. 1–15; Luke xviii. 18–30). The life, too, has the same double aspect which the kingdom presents. It is lived in this world, but it is in sharp contrast with a life devoted to this world (John xi. 25; cf. Luke xviii. 30). It is eternal life. It has that other-worldly character which belongs to the kingdom of God, as Jesus describes it in John's Gospel, "not of this world" (John xviii. 36). It is life nourished by a perennial "spring of living water," and by "the bread of life of which a man shall eat and not die" (John iv. 13, 14, vi. 50). Its characteristic feature is fellowship with God and with those who love Him. Further, like kingdom of God, the phrase

life, eternal life, is not entirely new. The grander views of life in fellowship with God were already familiar to the Jew, and the idea of resurrection was accepted by the majority of Christ's contemporaries. Our Saviour, therefore, does not find it necessary to define eternal life, any more than to define Kingdom or Christ, unless we take the words as a definition, "This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3). Jesus simply accepts the current ideas, derived largely from the Old Testament, in so far as they were correct.[1] But He makes one significant addition to them. He joins the life inseparably with Himself as an outflow from the springs of His own Being (John vi. 35, x. 10, xi. 25, xiv. 6). What, then, is the life? It is the possession in growing perfection of all the faculties and powers, especially those that are moral and spiritual, with which God endows men, their consecration to God's service, and their delighted use for this end in the way in which He designed men to use them. It is life as Christ lived it and gave it, life within the limits and under the conditions of the kingdom of God. For, as Christian says to Pliable, "There is an endless kingdom to be inhabited, and everlasting life to be given us, that we may inhabit that kingdom for ever."

The completeness of its connection with the kingdom, however, its rich ethical import, and its full suggestiveness, are only reached, when we recall (1) the number of vital processes which are used to illustrate the mysteries of the kingdom, and (2) the set of cognate terms that run parallel to it, and describe those who possess it, or the blessings it embodies.

(1) On the former point, it is instructive to recall the number of parables of the kingdom drawn from the seed

[1] H. J. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 203 f., 222; Moorhouse, *Teaching of Christ*, p. 141 f.

and its growth. There are the parables of the Sower, of the Tares, of the Seed growing secretly, of the Grain of Mustard Seed. Similarly, there are the parables of the Leaven, the New Wine fermenting in the Old Bottles, and the Barren Fig Tree. All of these suggest how essentially a thing of life is the constitution of the kingdom. And not only so, but some of them show that what is thus alive and growing is not something isolated and solitary, but something in constant touch with neighbours, and only in company with them attaining full perfection. In John's Gospel there correspond to these parables from the Synoptics, the Corn of Wheat, and the Vine and its Branches, explaining, the one the origin, and the other the continuance of the life, of those in union with Jesus Christ. But the very figures employed suggest that the healthy product is no set of isolated units, but a corporate whole with a common life. Life, therefore, corporate as well as individual, is distinctive of the result in which Christ contemplated the accomplishment of His design. Life and kingdom are correlative ideas.

(2) But still more significant is what might be called the natural history of a member of Christ's society. As given by Christ Himself, it commences with a birth, *i.e.* with the origination of a new life by the life-giving spirit (John iii. 3 ff.). The result of this is a child [1] of God. He with whom the child enters into this relationship is the Father, and it is through His well-beloved Son. And the effort, ambition, and achievement of Christ was to link these children together into one whole on the model of the closest family tie that exists, that of Himself to His Father (John xvii. 20–23). In John's Gospel He does not use the word "family," and He uses "brethren" on only two occasions, both after the resurrection. But what else is implied

[1] Τέκνον = child, a word which emphasises the vital relationship, not υἱός = son, which points to the privileges of the position.

in the obedience for which He calls, and the mutual love which He enjoins, among those for whom He goes to prepare a place among the many mansions of His Father's house? (John xiv.). These are the terms which gather round life, when Christ speaks in John's Gospel.

In the Synoptics the family relationship is also employed by Christ, although the allusions are chiefly in the form of figures, and deal more with the fulfilment of its functions than with its constitution and vital ties. Entering the kingdom is, by being converted and becoming like little children (Matt. xviii. 3). In virtue of spiritual affinity, men and women, bound to Him by no physical relationship, are regarded as most truly His brothers, sisters, mother (Matt. xii. 48 ff.). Disciples, willing for His sake to give up father, mother, child, etc., receive instead a place in a vast spiritual family circle (Mark x. 30). But figure disappears when He calls God Father, calls them brethren, bids them be like their Father, and play, man to man, a brother's part.

In other parts of the New Testament this vital bond constantly reappears. John's Gospel, when he speaks in it himself, is full of it, and so are his Epistles. He dwells on Christ as the Life. In men, life commences by a new birth from God, Christ giving them the power, or right, to become children of God (John i. 1–14). It is the blessed relation in which every believer stands: "Now are we children of God," and under the inspiration of the thought, all purify themselves, as Christ is pure (1 John iii. 1–4). This also constitutes them brethren to one another, and as such determines the life they are to lead, the life worthy of its eternal essence. Closely akin to John's thought is James's conception of the origin of spiritual life: "Of His own will He (*i.e.* the Father of Lights) brought us forth by the word of truth" (Jas. i. 17, 18). Peter, too, has this thought of a divine begetting, of newborn babes desiring to be fed

with the sincere milk of the word. Indeed the whole passage, 1 Pet. i. 3–10, is a striking parallel to 1 John iii. 1 ff.

But the idea is appropriated and developed most originally by Paul. He has the common thought of eternal life. "Christ is our life:" "Our life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 3, 4). It stands out, as it does also in John, both when he gives Christ's words and his own, in contrast with death (Rom. vi. 23; Eph. ii. 1–10). Of its origin he follows hints that suggest resurrection rather than birth (Gal. ii. 19, 20; Rom. vi. 3–11, etc.; cf. John v. 24 ff.). Yet for him, the believer is a new creation, God's "poem," created unto good works (Eph. ii. 10). And when once he has got the idea of child of God, *τέκνον*, he claims the privileges: "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. viii. 12–17). He claims the name *υἱός* = one who occupies the position and possesses the dignity and privilege of a son of God. As I take it, that explains Paul's use of the word *υἱοθεσία*, translated "adoption" (Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 5; Eph. i. 5). It is not a mere accommodation to Roman ideas to help them to understand how a man, who was not a child of God by nature, could become a child of God. Such an idea is too formal and external for the fulness of Paul's thought. Divine sonship is a reality, and *υἱοθεσία* is the endowment of one who is already *τέκνον* with the dignity and privileges which are implied in *υἱός*, as soon as he is fit to use them. The context in Gal. iii. 23–iv. 5, and Rom. viii. 12 ff., bears this out. In the former passage Paul is using the passing of the heir from the stage of tutelage to majority to illustrate the passage of a man from under the law to the liberty of Christ, and in proof of its accomplishment he mentions one inevitable result, endowment with the Spirit, which gives him boldness to call God Abba, Father. In Romans the course of thought is practically the same. Those led by

the Spirit of God are the sons of God (*υἱοί*). They have the spirit which corresponds to the dignity and privilege of the position they hold in view of their *υἱοθεσία*. Hence they must be *τέκνα*, persons in filial relation to God, and fit to receive its privileges. These children constitute God's family, and live in the tenderest brotherly relation to one another. And, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which dwells in them, they live lives in conformity to the law of holy liberty (Rom. viii. 3 ff.; Gal. v. 1 ff.). In ordinary unaffected address they are called indiscriminately brethren, or saints, or, in felicitous conjunction, holy brethren.

Paul pushes the idea of the right of sons a stage farther. This gift of the Holy Spirit is an earnest of something grander still. And here we find a term awaiting, which in Paul, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and 1 Peter, describes again the ideal to which salvation tends. It is the word "inheritance." It suggests nothing that is not already implied in words already considered. But it places the prospect in the attractive light which it assumed to the eyes of the men for whom it was in store. If it was God's kingdom, it was their inheritance, the grand opportunity for the full enjoyment of the eternal life they already possessed (Rom. viii. 17; Gal. iii. 18; Col. iii. 24; Eph. i. 14; Heb. ix. 15; 1 Pet. i. 4).

Thus, by taking the idea of eternal life, not simply by itself, but in connection with the whole scheme of spiritual biology, we arrive at a conception which is seen to be closely allied with what is implied in kingdom of God, and not less in keeping with what Paul describes as the Church. We see that it is not so exclusively Johannine as to cause any doubt as to its genuine use by Christ. And it is a germ which has borne fruit in the thoughts of all who received their most cherished conceptions from Christ's own fertilising discourse.

Having regard to this vocabulary, we recognise the two-fold effect which Jesus had to achieve in order to realise His ideal. He had to create and foster new life, and prepare the environment congenial to it. The environment consists in a circle of kindred souls all imbued with the same desires, aspirations, and principles. In the first instance, all He can give is Himself. But each new life, called into existence, helps the general good. As the community gathers round Himself, each helps the faith and life of all. Of first importance is union with Him: "I am the vine, ye are the branches; without Me, ye can do nothing" (John xv. 5). A bundle of branches has no life apart from the stem. But united with Him, the strength of every stalwart bough helps the growth of all the springing shoots.

We have now to ask what was the thought of Christ and His apostles as to the realisation of this society. But there are several points that must not be forgotten in approaching this subject. It is necessary, for one thing, to anticipate a little, because the question of the realisation of the Kingdom is very closely connected with the fortunes of the King. Then, again, the interests of the society involve the interests of the individual members. And in general this question involves the whole Christian view of the future. It is also very helpful to correct results, to keep in mind the lesson of the known fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. In prophecy, favoured men have been permitted to gaze along the vistas of the future, but from different windows. It is not possible, therefore, either to gauge the perspective of each, or to adjust the exact position of each development, depicted by separate individuals, in the scene. And the outlook was never given with any such intention. Invariably the subject is introduced to exercise an immediate influence upon conduct; to stimulate, sustain, or warn, never to satisfy curiosity, or encourage speculation. Since

this is so, it is indispensable, in order to understand the prophecies, to put ourselves in the position of the predicters, their hearers and their times, and not to interpret the predictions merely in the light of our reading of subsequent events. If we can discover their reading of any events in which they see any of their own prophecies fulfilled, we shall be much nearer understanding the others. This will prevent an insistive literalism which is fatal to truth. Was the kingdom, then, a thing of the present, or a hope of the future? Or is this alternative misleading? Was it really both? What we have already established as to the nature of this society involves the answer, involves the interpretation which we are to put on the terms used. This does not amount to forestalling inquiry. It simply means that here is the clue to what is essential and what is accommodational in the utterances. These must be interpreted in harmony with the original conception to which they refer. We are sometimes confronted with another supposed antinomy of a spiritual, as against a Jewish, apocalyptical, and therefore non-spiritual eschatology.[1] But, again, is that an irreconcilable alternative? The question is, which is determinative, the spiritual or the apocalyptical? If the whole trend of the teaching of Jesus in presenting the nature of the kingdom itself has been to bring into prominence the spiritual kernel in the heart of Jewish embellishments, and to do it by emphasis of the true rather than by contradiction of the false, so that husk and shell simply fall away in time by neglect and disuse, it is legitimate to recognise the same method at work in the description of the future of the kingdom, and to read what is spectacular and material in the light of what is spiritual.

Thus, by way of illustration, take a saying of Christ's, uttered on two occasions, which has all the appearance of

[1] H. J. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 221, ii. 187; *Expository Times*, viii. 320, ix. 531.

being a genuine utterance in each of the settings, a case of repetition. It is the promise to the Twelve that "in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of His glory, they shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 30). To say nothing of the purely figurative description of the bliss of the kingdom connected with this saying in Luke,[1] it is evident that what Christ means is something like this. The Twelve had served Him in circumstances of special strain. If others were to reach a place in the kingdom, they were entitled to special favour; if others were to obtain citizenship, they were entitled to peerage, entitled to form, so to say, its aristocracy or its cabinet council, to hold a premier place even among its oldest heritors, "sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." But there is nothing more strictly Jewish in the reality, nothing less figurative in the language employed there, than in the ordinary use of the term Messiah, as applied to Jesus Himself.

It is impossible to evade the fact that, on the face of it, Christ presented the kingdom, which He came to found, in a double light, as already existent and as still to come. Many writers contend that only the one view or the other was really held by Jesus. But their works only demonstrate that on the surface, at anyrate, both appear; for the strength of their books is always devoted to ingenious efforts to get rid of the force of the statements on one side or the other. As Wendt shows, this double aspect was due to no modifying of earlier views by later reflection in the light of experience. It was a constant factor in Christ's teaching. It is just as true of it, when the consummation is presented in terms of eternal life in John, as when it is in terms of

[1] It is compared to a banquet, and it is worse than absurd to ask men to believe that any Jew was ever so foolish as to think that the bliss of the heaven he was taught by God to expect was to consist in perpetual eating and drinking.

the kingdom in the Synoptics. And this has a striking parallel in varying aspects of the saving operations by which it is brought about, for these are sometimes spoken of as completed, sometimes as in process, and sometimes as awaiting execution at the last. From the very circumstances of the case, this is exactly what was to be expected. And it is to ignore the supreme concern of Jesus for moral interests and His respect for the conditions of moral life, to cavil at this varying presentation, as if it were incoherent or self-contradictory. In the gradual formation around Himself, as the Messiah, of a little company of men, animated by an eager desire to live in right relations to God and their fellow-men, and devoted to the task of permeating society with their views, there was the justification of all Jesus said of the actual present existence of the kingdom, and of the possession by its members of eternal life. Its humble condition and its silent unobtrusive methods easily explain what He meant when He said, "It cometh not with observation," and is already "among you" (Luke xvii. 20, 21). But this was the initial stage. It was nothing to what would be, when its principles should have fully asserted themselves in the whole range of the life of each adherent, and all susceptible of its spell had come to own allegiance to its King. Then, in a far grander sense, the kingdom would come, "as in heaven, so on earth."

Was this, however, to be immediately, or only after long delay? There is little doubt that in the primitive Church there was intense expectancy of the coming of Christ, the *παρουσία*, with which was often associated, and especially at first, the idea of the completed kingdom, and the judgment in which its victorious completion should be gloriously manifested. There is very much in the teaching of the apostles and in the utterances of Christ that explains the origin of this belief, even in its crudest form. But what is the significance of the fact

that the Early Church has retained the documents in which the sayings occur on which were founded the views which the course of events proved mistaken, and that one of the books, about which they seem to have hesitated, was the Book of Revelation,[1] on the surface of which this speedy return seemed to be most prominently written? Is it not this? They perceived that the hasty interpretation, which was most congenial to heated imaginations, was not the only one, nor the right one, and another more deliberate, more comprehensive, came nearer the mark.

For what is Christ's teaching? In His forecast of the future He insists on four certainties: (1) His own immediate manifestation in power, (2) a speedy and tragic reckoning with the Jewish people, (3) thereupon a rapid and universal dissemination of the news of the gospel, and (4) His final glorious return as Judge. But Jesus was far too much alive to facts to allow His insistence on these four certainties to obscure His vision to the incidence of death in the lives of thousands around Him every day, or to suggest that His disciples would be impervious to its assault. He tells them explicitly that death may be the price of their loyalty to Him. But over against that He sets the resurrection, in which the tragedy of death is eclipsed in life.

The *locus classicus* for the eschatology of Christ is Matt. xxiv. and xxv. But it is a mistake to limit the section thus. These two chapters are only a part of the great group of teaching on the last day of Christ's public ministry. It is all instinct with the impending catastrophe. From xxi. 18 onwards, He is speaking in view of the end. And the full import of the two chapters is only felt, when they are read in close touch with what precedes, and in view of the tragic events which began

[1] Salmon (*Introduction to the New Testament*) has a very suggestive paragraph in this connection, p. 273.

with His seizure on the very next day.[1] Now as to His own death, Jesus never contemplated it apart from His immediate resurrection. When He sealed His own death warrant by His reply to Caiaphas, it was in terms that indicate that He regarded the sentence He knew they would pass in view of His words as virtually His own investiture with power. "Henceforth," He says (*i.e.* from now onwards, ἀπ' ἀρτί = ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν. So Liddle and Scott), "ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matt. xxvi. 64).[2] In Christ's mind, therefore, His own resurrection is the decisive transition for Himself and for the fortunes of His kingdom from humiliation to glory. In the light of that all His sayings about men of His own day living to see the Son of man coming in His kingdom are easily understood, and stand fulfilled. And this view of the significance of the resurrection of Christ is predominant throughout the preaching of the Acts of the Apostles, the letters of Paul, and the vision of the Apocalypse. In Matt. xxiv. Christ is answering the question of His disciples as to the time at which the fate, which He says is impending over Jerusalem, will fall. With wealth of circumstantial detail He sketches the course of events which are to fall out within that generation, and in which God's rejection of the Jewish people and His visitation on them of all their sins would be conspicuously accomplished (xxiv. 34; cf. vv. 23, 36). And the effect, He says, of this drastic measure would be the clearing of the ground for a proclamation of the gospel more

[1] Many say the next but one. It is the one or the other. It is a question whether or not room should be found for a blank day in the middle of Passion Week.

[2] Cf. the repeated reference in John to the anticipated effect of "His being lifted up" with its double implication (John iii. 14 f., viii. 28, xii. 32, 34); and also note what Weizsäcker (*Apostolic Age*, i. 65) says of the prediction of the destruction of the temple, though I cannot concur with his view of it as against John ii. 19.

glorious than ever (ver. 31), just because its most determined opponent was laid low. Now this whole stage of the experience of the kingdom is thought of, by those passing through it and in harmony with Christ's sketch of it, as peculiarly a time of trial and conflict. In Acts the converts are reminded that they must expect tribulation (Acts xiv. 22). James and Peter write to encourage those who are in the midst of trials. Paul speaks in the same spirit in Corinthians, Romans, and Philippians. And the visions of Revelation, while they depict principles that are constantly operating in the development of Christianity, up to the end of chap. xiii. refer to this same period of conflict, the interval, that is to say, between the resurrection and the fate of the "city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where the Lord was crucified" (xi. 8). At that point the centre of opposition to the followers of Christ undergoes a change. The fate of apostate Jerusalem is decided. The new seat of hostility is Babylon = Rome. But coincidently with this transition appears an Angel in Heaven, having the Eternal Gospel to proclaim (xiv. 6; cf. Matt. xxiv. 31). It is in this line, too, that 2 Thess. ii. is to be understood. There Paul is forecasting the very same course of events, and in striking agreement with Matt. xxiv. 10–13, 15. Everywhere there is the keenest sense of the enormous significance for Christ's cause of the fate of the Jewish State and Temple, when once that people has taken up a position of fixed hostility to Christ, and has met its doom at the hands of Rome (especially Rom. ix.–xi.).[1] These are the things which Christ said would all take place within a lifetime, a generation. And they did.

But it was here that His followers failed in their reckoning of the foreshortening in the rest of the picture. In what

[1] Godet (*Commentary on Luke*, ii. 126) brings out, with effect, the parallel with Rom. ix.–xi. in Christ's own teaching.

follows, Christ looks away into the distance. He sketches a day of final coming and reckoning. Its exact date even He does not know. But as Matt. xxi. 43, xxii. 7, 9, 12, xxiv. 48, xxv. 5, 19, all indicate, it was not to be immediately. It is to be a coming for judgment, final judgment, and He is to be judge. In this judgment all mankind is to appear before Him. How far off it was, the followers of Christ at first did not in the least realise.[1] They thought that it was to take place immediately after its fate overtook Jerusalem. They were so impressed with what Jesus chiefly insisted on with regard to this day,—matters that are just as true to-day as they were for them,—namely, its certainty, its constantly impending imminence, its finality, and therefore the urgency for preparedness and constant watchfulness for it, that they interpreted it all as meaning that the day must be very near indeed. But as years went on, they understood better what Christ had meant. They learned that, alive or in their graves when He came, they must still appear at His bar. They realised that in this way He is indeed always very near, "at hand." As death carried off ever another and another, their assurance grew that the company of the redeemed was gathering to Christ's side. Perplexing questions might arise as to the "how" and the "what" of the risen life (1 Cor. xv. 35), but the essential points for a believer were, that to be absent from the body was to be present with the Lord, and that a personal, individual resurrection was a certainty (John xi. 24 ff.; 1 Thess. iv. 13 ff.; 1 Cor. xv. 50 ff.). When at last the destruction of Jerusalem was a thing of the past, John's Gospel brought to light a wealth of sayings of Christ which had never got full value attached to them pending that event, which gave new weight to others which had been known indeed, but only imperfectly appreciated, and which fully attested the correctness of the growing convictions. Paul had already been approximating to the full truth

[1] Erich Haupt, *Commentary on 1 John* ii. 18 (p. 94 f., German edition).

more rapidly than any other, and trying to make others understand also. As he had come to recognise what the Church really was, he was able to see the Christian community as already in a way enjoying every blessing that there is in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph. i. 3). Similarly years before (Rom. viii.), he felt that in the gift of the Spirit he had the earnest of the bliss of heaven, fellowship with God in Christ, from which nothing earthly could separate him. And if conflict still continued, it was conflict for which the armour of the early day (1 Thess. v. 8) was still the equipment (Eph. vi. 14–16), and victory was certain. And so the Church was quite prepared to hear John recall that Jesus had said that the man who believed in Him was really passed from death into life, and would not come into condemnation (John v. 24; cf. xi. 25 ff.). It understood now the two resurrections of which Jesus had spoken, and at which the disciples once had marvelled (John v. 25–29), and this, in turn, made simple many an enigmatic word of John's own Apocalypse, *e.g.* xx. 6. It understood, what once had seemed so inconsequential, but now so perfectly inevitable, that of the man who had life Jesus should immediately add, "and I will raise him up at the last day" (John vi. 39, 40, 44, 54). Judgment the apostles saw to be in process, and the last day of final reckoning only its sublime conclusion. They saw that the city John depicted in the Revelation was not simply a vision of the grand hereafter, but in process of construction after its own magnificent plan, "coming down out of heaven from God," even here and now (Rev. xxi. 2, 9, 10; cf. Eph. v. 25–27).[1] More than ever they understood in the light of the eagerly-recalled farewell addresses of the now absent Lord (John xiv.–xvi.), that, while He was away, preparing a place for them, to which He would yet come to take them, all power was already His,

[1] Bernard, Bampton Lecture, *On the Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament*, p. 197 f.

and He was with them alway, unto the end of the world. What the grand issue would be they did not exactly know; but this they could say, "When He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall" (and this is said not to account for the likeness, but to justify the expectation) "see Him as He is" (1 John iii. 1 ff.). It was thus the Church gradually came to understand the forecast of the future given by Christ, and to learn its mission and equipment in view of it.

But its outlook left it with one conviction more deeply stamped than any other. In view of this future one call was supreme, the call to preparedness in holiness of character. Only the holy of heart and mind could enjoy the bliss of heaven, which is uninterrupted fellowship with the holy God. And it is by the holiness of their lives that men are to be tried at the bar of God. All this teaching as to the future has been introduced to emphasise the need for holiness. Constant response to the call of holy love alone will stand the test by which men and women can appear approved before Christ's throne. And this is not at variance with the call for faith, for it is only the inevitable issue of any faith worth the name. Christ's vision of judgment (Matt. xxv. 31 ff.), and Paul's (Rom. viii. 31), are not antagonistic, but complementary. Just as little does it clash with the graciousness of the gift of salvation to find its final blessings spoken of as rewards, rewards as the results of a scrutiny of character. By various lines of illustration Jesus makes plain that so far as claim is concerned there is none. There is no room for Hegel's unworthy sneer, "So you want a tip because you have supported your sick mother, and not poisoned your brother!"[1] Christ says explicitly, "When ye have done all, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which is our duty to do" (Luke xvii. 10). On that side, merit and reward are quite inappropriate terms. On the other hand, as expressive of God's appreciation of the work of His servants,

[1] Heine's *Confessions*, Prose Works, p. 203 (Camelot Classics).

the words are perfectly admissible and intelligible. It is the clue to the hyperbolical description of divine delight in the parable of the returning master (Luke xii. 35–38). And as there are degrees of excellence, so there are gradations of glory—ten cities for the man who gains ten pounds, five for him who earns five (Luke xix. 11–27), or as Paul expresses it, "If any man's work abide which he hath built, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor. iii. 14 f.). In the eschatology of Christ and of His apostles the judgment is on the things done in the body, is final, and is universal (Matt. xxv. 25 ff.; 2 Cor. v. 10). There is no suggestion of an intermediate state of probation after death. There is not a hint of a purgatory in the case of the saints. To pass away trusting in Christ, will be to be with the Lord in Paradise (Luke xxiii. 43). To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord (2 Cor. v. 6–9; Phil. i. 23). Just as little is there a hint of a possibility of retrieving a hostile verdict on the life here by a changed life under a new set of conditions hereafter. The very opposite, indeed, is implied in the parable of Dives and Lazarus (Luke xvi. 19 ff.). The judgment includes all mankind in its sweep. If, after the analogy of the parable of the Tares (Matt. xiii. 24–30), in the majority of Christ's references to it He deals with its place in determining the fate of those who have been in more or less connection with the kingdom, the explanation of the parable of the Drag-net (Matt. xiii. 47–50) takes a wider sweep, and, with other utterances, justifies the attitude of the apostles, as they press the urgency of their message on all men in view of a coming judgment for all. Degrees of guilt are indeed recognised, and fate will correspond to measure of guilt (Luke xii. 47, 48; Matt. xi. 20–24). Capernaum takes a bad pre-eminence, in the one as in the other, over abandoned Sodom. But when on a phrase like "more

tolerable for Sodom than for thee," words intended to convey, not so much the unutterable woe, as the unutterable wickedness and the utter hopelessness of a case worse than all that was regarded as hopeless before, Beyschlag[1] attempts to build a hope of final escape for even the worst, it is but a specimen of the straits to which the upholders of a theory are forced, in order to extract any such thought from sayings of Christ or His apostles. Much, most indeed, is left in mystery. Christ will not discuss the number of the saved. His teaching is for practical ends. His only answer when questioned about it is, " Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able " (Luke xiii. 23 ff.). But of the bliss of the glorified He speaks with no faltering voice. They inherit the kingdom prepared for them (Matt. xxv. 34; Luke xii. 32; Rom. viii. 17; 1 Pet. i. 4). They receive and wear the crown of life (1 Cor. ix. 25; 2 Tim. iv. 8; Jas. i. 12; 1 Pet. v. 4; Rev. ii. 10). Paul contemplates the future with a blissful sense of security. The righteous shine as the sun in the kingdom of the Father (Matt. xiii. 43).

It will elucidate what follows, if, before closing this chapter, account is taken in a word of the grand condition which Christ and His disciples regarded as essential to the realisation of the kingdom. It has been suggested in every form in which the nature of redeemed humanity has been presented to us. It is a union between God and man, achieved in Christ. Kingdom, Church, Eternal Life, as we have studied them, have each involved the closest possible inter-relation of all who have a share in them. But what we have not especially emphasised is the place which Christ claimed for Himself as the Ruler of the kingdom, the Head of this Body the Church, and the vital source of all true life. If there is union with one another among the members,

[1] *New Testament Theology*, i. 208.

there is still closer union with Him, and this union is the basis of the other. He is the most conspicuous and essential element in the constitution of the society, and on Him its existence and fate depend. And the sequel of His teaching of the kingdom is not simply Himself, but also the attitude which men assume toward Him. The revelation of Himself which follows, and which, as we shall see, is the revelation of the union in Him of divinity with humanity, has, as its correlative, a call to men to unite themselves by faith with God revealed in Him. The incarnation, with the tragic and glorious incidents in which it eventuated, was the union of God, not with any single individual, but with the human race. But in a sense it is repeated in the spiritual life of every individual believer. By faith "God dwelleth in him and he in God." The justification of this statement will be evident on every page of what follows, and it will come more and more distinctly to the front when looked at from the manward side. Meantime it is sufficient to say that the initiative in it is taken by Christ, and it is its reality in His sight that gives His personality and what He did its primal importance for men. These, therefore, next demand attention. But there is no doctrine of the Christian faith that has so failed, as this of union with Christ, to receive that prominence in the thought of the Church or that distinctive treatment which it deserves and demands. It is not going too far to say that this is the fundamental truth of Christianity, is the principle which explains every step in the plan of salvation, and which dispels the mystery that to many hangs around doctrines of atonement and justification by faith. It still awaits the advent of some great theologian to do justice to the glorious truth, lift it out of the region of mere mysticism, and show its dominant influence on every side of Christian truth and life. For all who grasp the truth itself, it is like a breath of life through the whole domain of their religious thought and experience.

CHAPTER VI

Son of Man and Son of God

The Person of Christ—Christ's Restraint in speaking of Himself, and the Reason for it—Can the Sense of His Utterances be limited to His Vocation?

His Person a Problem to the Apostles—They, the best Witnesses to their own Meaning—Humanity conceded—Question is as to Divinity—What do Synoptics mean by Son of God?—They are sole Authorities for earthly Life—Significance of the Time of their Appearance, midway between Paul and John—The View given in Acts—The View of the Contemporaries of the Synoptics, Revelation and Hebrews—What is required by the Aim of Hebrews—Relation to Alexandrian Thought—These represent prevalent Thought in Jewish-Christian Circles—James and Peter, no Objection—Chief Significance of Relation of Paul and John.

Paul—Two Peculiarities of His View: Its Origin and its Sacredness—Paul's Conception included Belief in the Pre-incarnate Existence of Christ, but not as Archetypal Man, or as identical with the Spirit—Essentially Divine—Subordinate to, but equal with, the Father—Philippians ii. 5–11—Colossians and Ephesians—Contrast with Philo—The Meaning of John's Prologue—Summary.

Christ's own Teaching—Speculation as to Origin of this View useless—Yet striking Analogy—(1) Son of God—Temptation proceeds on footing that He is Son of God—He does not claim this till near the end of Ministry—Repudiations of Blasphemy show He entertained this View all along—(2) Son of Man—Reserve detected in use of this Title—What does Son of Man mean?—Why used—Need for Reserve seen from case of Disciples—Matthew xi. 25–30—Teaches essential Deity—Christ's teaching in John's Gospel—Purpose of Gospel—Same Personality—Progressive Statement of Divinity—Chapters vii.–x. devoted to a Discussion of the Subject—Identification with the Father—As in Synoptics, increasing Directness of Utterance as the Gospel proceeds—Comparison of Christ and Apostles—Result.

In Christ's own teaching the kingdom gradually gives place to the King. Jesus gives ever greater prominence

to Himself. He asserts for Himself a rôle in the reconstitution of humanity which is quite exceptional, and on which its very existence is made to depend. It is to be His kingdom. Only by union with Him are men to find a place in it. And at length in explicit terms to the Twelve, to Caiaphas, and, in a form suited to his mode of thought, to Pilate, that is, to the responsible representatives of both His friends and His foes, He definitely admits that He is the Messiah, the Christ, the King.

That is not disputed. It is pointed out, indeed, that there is a considerable amount of restraint in Christ's way of speaking of Himself. It is done by allusion and suggestion more than by direct statement. But, as Johannes Weiss so strikingly urges,[1] that proceeds in part from the unwillingness of Jesus to discuss in public what was one of the most sacred convictions of His own inner life, the result of the unhesitating response of His faith to the revelation of His Father to Himself. It was due, too, to His wish that the recognition of His Messiahship should come to others as it did to Himself, that is, as the result of faith. He presented it in forms fitted to provoke inquiry. Soon they asked, "How long dost Thou make us to doubt? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly?" (John x. 24): "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" (Matt. xi. 3): "Who is this Son of man?" (John xii. 34). When in their address to Him they relapsed into mere conventionalities, He quickly caught them up, "Why callest thou me good?" (Mark x. 18; Luke xviii. 19):[2] "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head" (Matt. viii. 20; Luke ix. 58). When Pilate first asked Him, "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" He did not reply directly, but inquired if this question was spontaneous or prompted; and when

[1] *Nachfolge Christi*, p. 29 ff.

[2] Lidgett, *Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*, p. 345 f.

He found that it was the latter, He answered in such a way as led to the repetition of it in a new form, the product now of awakened personal interest, "Art thou a King then?" (John xviii. 33–38). He preferred to speak of Himself under a term, "Son of man," which left great room for discussion. But all this was not due to any perplexity in His own mind. It was intended to rivet men's attention to Himself, and leave their verdict on Him in their own hands, determined, not by authority or by external proof, but by moral insight and spiritual affinity. As to the result, He was intensely anxious. Witness His own inquiries of His disciples as to what men were saying about Him, and His delight at the flash of spiritual penetration—a very gift from His Father—which surprised into definiteness Peter's previous surmisings, and furnished his famous reply. Christ undoubtedly presented Himself as, and desired that men should find in Him, the Messiah, the Christ.

It will be seen, of course, that this in itself does not raise any question as to His Person. It only raises the question of His vocation. And it is a common contention that all that was said by Jesus about Himself can be brought within the scope of descriptions of that vocation. Words of His that seem to involve more, such as His use of the name "Son of God," are rigorously restricted to their most meagre sense. If the language of any of His followers obviously will not conform to this, but asserts for Him a dignity and nature far above anything merely human, this is set aside as an idiosyncrasy of the individual, out of keeping with Jewish conceptions of Messiahship, or beyond the intelligence or thought of primitive Christians. But why is there such a very marked discrepancy between the treatment accorded to the idea of the Kingdom, and that to His presentation of Himself as the King? The one has been recognised as embodying

an ideal far surpassing all Jewish conceptions. The other, the idea of the Christ, has been restricted to the narrowest limits.[1] And some later efforts to reduce again to Jewish limits Christ's conception of the kingdom seem as if dictated by an undefined sense of this incongruity. In view, however, of what we have already seen of Christ's true conception of the kingdom, we are led to think that the logic of the incongruous situation points in the opposite direction, and calls for a revision of limited views of the Messiah in order to bring them into harmony with the kingdom, as He understood it. Then again, what though certain views of Christ's person are pronounced at variance with contemporary Jewish anticipations of the Messiah? These anticipations were far astray here on almost every point, and required constant correction at the hands of Christ. And how little the men of His time were disposed to acquiesce in this correction and accept His reading of the truth, is tragically proved by the fact that they crucified Him on this very score. Contemporary Jewish thought and parlance may help us to the sources of some of Christ's words. They can never be regarded as determinative of their ultimate sense on His lips. Still further, it is not to the point to tell us what words must have meant to primitive Christian thought. Are we to believe that the crude ideas of the general public of early Christianity afford a more exact index of its essence than the mature views of its noblest spirits? Christ Himself distinguishes. "Whom do men say that I am? . . . But whom say ye that I am?" And it is the answer of those best qualified to judge and to speak that is really worth attending to. Christian truth cannot be treated like a sum in vulgar fractions, where the all-essential is to find the least common multiple, as if the irreducible minimum

[1] As a recent representative of this, see Orello Cone, *The Gospel and its Earliest Interpretations*. Cf. pp. 46–62 with 90–108.

were sure to be the whole truth. In a matter like this, the sum of the thought of the finest minds is far more likely to express it.[1]

Now it is quite evident that the apostles felt that the life, character, and experience of Jesus raised a problem as to His nature. They found it very hard to make Jesus fit into the common terms of human existence. And this conviction grew in intensity the longer they knew Him. The more they observed and reflected, the more singular He appeared. The conclusion to which they came was, that "the Son of God" was the only name which adequately described Him. The question, of course, is, what did they mean by Son of God, and does it correspond with what Christ thought and said of Himself?

The first authority for their meaning must be their own statements. The force of these cannot be evaded by appeal to passages in the Old Testament, as if the use of Son of God there must be determinative. There mere men, in view of their official positions, are sometimes called sons of God. And the fact that the vocation of Jesus is that of the Messiah, might give plausibility to a contention for a similar use in His case. But, unless "divinely sanctioned official" is all that Son of God can ever mean, we are not shut up to this explanation. Just as little are we limited to a view of the phrase as used of Jesus, drawn from its use in the New Testament of men who enter into the filial relation to God, become sons of God through Christ, unless it is shown that they and He enjoy this position on the same terms. We must look at the facts which are adduced to prove that Jesus is the Son of God to learn from them what is meant by the phrase. If it appears that it involves something quite unique, a person-

[1] This is not at variance with the argument previously urged for the popular character of early Christian teaching, because the matter here in dispute is one involving for its apprehension powers, not of intellectual capacity, but of spiritual insight and affinity.

ality *sui generis*, no *à priori* contentions, as to what a union of human and divine in one person would demand, are to influence our consideration of the facts, or to be allowed to say what must be and what must not be, if this be true. We must simply accept the facts, and construct our theory upon them. As Bishop Moorhouse says, we must not "make the man a God in order to deny that God became a man."[1] But no more may we make God man in order to avoid making man God. Accepting the well-attested humanity of Christ, we must not extend the terms of humanity till all distinction between human and divine vanishes, in order to avoid admitting the essential and unique divinity of Jesus among the sons of men; just as we must not, admitting His divinity, argue from that to the practical elimination of His humanity. It is well to bear in mind here also the inevitable insufficiency of language that will accrue, if Jesus is this unique Personality. All words used will only be approximations,—attempts to express what was previously unknown and unimagined, gropings to find suitable terms for this new and glorious reality, of which men wonderingly realise more and more of the magnificence by the failure of all words in previous use adequately to describe it.

In our day it is not necessary to argue for the true humanity of Jesus Christ. Whatever else, whatever more, has been discovered in His life, that is now joyfully and gladly acknowledged on every hand. But was that all His disciples recognised in Him? Did they mean no more than this, even when they called Him "Son of God"? On turning for answer to the Gospels, their full significance only becomes clear, when two things are remembered. First, they are the authority for the details of the intensely human life of Jesus of Nazareth. Second, the Synoptics appeared in point of time contemporaneously

[1] *The Teaching of Christ*, p. 66.

with the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Revelation, and about midway between the writings of Paul and the Gospel and Epistles of John. Without repeating what was said in the first chapter, the former fact means this, that these authors are quite convinced of the thoroughly human element in Jesus. They say nothing to minimise or obscure that. All the familiar features, so often collated to bring out the genuineness of the humanity, are to be found there. So little are they the victims of stereotyped theory that they record with perfect naturalness the story of His Temptation, the limitation He set on His own knowledge, the call for an explanation from the man who gave Him a title "good," fit only for God, and above all the tragedy of His death. They have preserved for us that striking phrase which Jesus used to describe Himself, and which is used by practically no other, the Son of man. And so if their words ever imply more than humanity, if events they narrate involve more than the human for their explanation, they do so with the full consciousness of the writers. In this light, what must we think of the narrative of the birth, as given by Matthew and Luke? Whether the incidents actually occurred as narrated or not, the narration of them clearly shows that to these writers the life of Jesus had no ordinary origin.[1] As Stopford Brooke virtually admits,[2] they express the profound conviction that only divine parentage was com-

[1] It has been asserted that the ideas of supernatural conception aud pre-existence are mutually exclusive (Ménégoz, *La Théologie de l'Épitre aux Hébreux*, 90 ff.), and a contrast between the Synoptics, and John and Paul, has been instituted upon the contention. The ground is that in the case of supernatural conception (*sc.* birth by the Holy Spirit from the Virgin) the Christ would not have existed prior to the conception. In a sense that is true. The Incarnate Christ did not exist prior to the conception. But the same is true in the case of natural conception, in spite of the aid of the Platonic premises of the Judæo-Alexandrine School. So this is not decisive in establishing a contrast between the thoughts of the Synoptics and of John and Paul on the question of the pre-incarnate existence of Christ.

[2] *God and Christ*, chap. xiii.

patible with the life of Jesus Christ, as they knew it. In His origin He, as no other, was divine. Why do they narrate the story of the Baptism, or of the Transfiguration, or of the Resurrection, or of Thomas's accepted adoration, "My Lord and my God," if they believe in no more than striking moral affinity between Jesus and God? Why especially the Baptism when, to judge from their silence, nothing had as yet occurred in His life to indicate special moral attainment? It is because striking moral affinity is not the limit of their belief. They believe more, and these things indicate what that belief is, and what throbs beneath the words, when they call Him Son of God. They regard this man as more than man, Divine.

But, secondly, in point of time, the Gospels appear about midway between Paul and John. Had the order been Synoptics, Paul, John, it might have been argued, with considerable speciousness, that there was a distinct and gradual development in the view of the Person of Christ, from distinguished man to incarnate God. But that is not the order. The last of Paul's Epistles is written as soon as the earliest Gospel, and yet in Dr. Somerville's *St. Paul's Conception of Christ*, page after page of the exposition, while most apposite to the subject in hand, reads like a statement of the views set forth in John. The reason is not far to seek. Paul's view, the earliest recorded view, of the Person of Christ, is very little different from the latest, that of John.[1] And the conclusion one arrives at is that it is not the fundamental conception that varies, but the types of mind that present it. In the midst of this lofty flight of contemplation appear the Gospels. There is not a hint in them of protest or objection. On the contrary, they rather suggest an attempt in homelier phrase to

[1] Cf. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, i. 97: "Here (*i.e.* in John's Gospel) we have pourtrayed . . . a speaking, acting, Pauline Christ," etc.

help the simple and uninitiated to understand the peerless position ascribed to Jesus by Paul, and which is restated by John.

But it may be asked, Do not the Acts of the Apostles place Jesus in another light? They never call Him Son of God. There He is but *παῖς τοῦ Θεοῦ, sc. Κυρίου* (Acts iii. 13, iv. 27, 30), God's, Jehovah's servant.[1] Does this not point to development, and show that only in course of time men came to think Jesus divine? For the fact, that is probably true; but that the Acts of the Apostles proves it, is quite another matter. As we know from the Synoptics, Jesus did not begin His own ministry by any announcement about Himself. Only by His character, complete at once in its freedom from defect or sin and in its embodiment of every grace and virtue, by His authoritative teaching, by His other-worldliness of bearing, and by His masterful control over physical health and powers, natural or Satanic, He arrested men's attention. Their curiosity awoke. They were attracted to Him. Inquiry was provoked as to who He was. And some at last ventured to think He must be the Messiah. But this did not for them involve divinity; Messiah was but Son of David. They had never asked themselves the question Jesus propounded to them: "If David call him Lord, whence is he then his son?" and so they had no answer for it. And even for the disciples, the death on the Cross was then, as it has ever been for the Jew, the stumbling-block to the idea of Christ's divinity. It is a mistake to suppose that the monotheism of the Jew raises an insuperable obstacle to the thought of Incarnation or a virgin birth. As a Jewish friend said to me: "that was quite simple, natural, בְּרוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ, by the Holy Spirit." But this was his difficulty: "If Jesus was the Son of

[1] The fact that in Acts iv. 27, 30, the person designated *παῖς* is *ὁ Χριστὸς τοῦ Κυρίου*, who is *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Κυρίου* in Ps. ii., which is expressly quoted, makes it very doubtful, if we should not translate *παῖς* with A.V., Child or Son, and not Servant, R.V.; cf. Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu*, i. 228.

God, why did God allow His Son to be cursed by crucifixion?" That is nineteenth century Judaism, it is true, but it is an exact reflex of what men felt in Jerusalem in Passion Week on Good Friday. And it was only the Resurrection that changed the current of even the disciples' thoughts, and led them to see in Jesus more than man, the incarnate Son of God. That was the course of the disciples' experience, as depicted in the Synoptics. And what the references to Jesus in the Acts of the Apostles bring out is not so much the sum total of what the apostles believed immediately after the Resurrection, as if they lingered at the thought of a distinguished man and nothing more, until speculation put a new complexion on receding facts. Rather it is this. It reports speech after speech, in which Peter and his fellow-apostles seek to force home on the consciences of their fellow-countrymen the dread significance of the fact that they had crucified one, be he who he may, whom God raised up. They bring all the light of prophecy to bear on the dignity of one so honoured (Pss. ii. xvi. etc.). They seek to force from the hearts of their listeners an answer to the question they set in motion there, who must this be? They simply pursue again Christ's method of provoking inquiry, and the book tells us how they did it. And we are not to limit their own views to those they express, when they take common ground with their audiences. All the more must we take note of this, when it is found that Paul, as reported there, pursues exactly the same course at Lystra and at Athens, and we know how far beyond what he says there his view of Christ's Person went. Besides, throughout the Acts, Jesus is not only *παῖς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ Χριστός*, but also the Holy and Just One, the Prince of Life, the Saviour, the God-appointed Judge of all, *ὁ Κυριός*, the LORD. If this does not amount to an explicit statement of His divinity, it indicates at least a latent consciousness that there is no blasphemy

or irreverence in attributing to Him prerogatives and powers hitherto ascribed to God alone, and which they dare not ascribe to any ordinary fellow-mortal.

Contemporary with these publications, or nearly so, appeared the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Revelation of John. The latter of these ascribes to Jesus the most exalted position of which it is possible to think. He is the constant and immediate associate, fellow and equal, of God. It is needless to cite passages in proof of this. Scarcely a chapter would fail to furnish abundance. And this feature, common to the whole book, is all the more striking in view of attempts to split up the book into fragments. It will be sufficient to notice the impressive passage in the opening chapter. After a salutation in the name of the Triune God, there comes a self-introduction, abrupt and arresting: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Thus it had fallen on John's ear, and he stops to tell the circumstances. That done, he repeats what he heard, and proceeds to describe the majestic presence from whose lips it came. In the description we recognise the Son of Man (ver. 13), but exalted to His place in glory. He says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega"[1] . . . "I am He that liveth and was dead: and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of death and of hell" (cf. xxi. 6 and xxii. 13). It is simply impossible to bring a personality of whom all that is true within the limits of humanity. What is true of Him is true only of God. And this is the keynote to the estimate of Jesus in the Apocalypse. Not that there His manhood is forgotten. It is striking how often He is named simply by the familiar name of His earthly sojourn, Jesus (xii. 17, xiv. 12, xxii. 16, cf. 20, etc.). His death, too, is sadly, lovingly, gratefully recalled. But His name now is KING OF

[1] The interpolation of the Authorised Version at ver. 11, if without textual support, is exegetically correct. Verses 17 ff. prove it.

KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS (xix. 16; cf. xvii. 14).[1] And all this stands written in a book, which is so permeated by Jewish imagery that some would fain get rid of its evidence for the early recognition, in even Jewish-Christian circles, of Christ's divinity by splitting it into fragments or relegating it to a very late date. But the attempt is a failure. And its testimony is conclusive.

Equally striking is the evidence of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In this Epistle there are many references to the Person of Christ. But what is distinctive of it is that, for the purpose of its writer, it is important to accord to Christ a position at once of unique relation to God, and of closest affinity with men.[2] This Epistle has been called the First Apology for Christianity. And that is true. But it is an apology addressed not to opponents, but to friends whose loyalty has been affected. It seeks to show to Jewish Christians that by the fall of Jerusalem and the wreck of Judaism, those who believe in Jesus would lose nothing and gain much. If their observance of the ceremonial of the old law must therewith perforce cease, that would be only the vanishing of the shadows before the light. From the first there was really no need for believers in Jesus to cling to Jewish rites and ceremonies. Indeed such observance had been on sufferance during a period of transition. And all that ever was of value in the Mosaic ritual was more than preserved in what was to be found in Christ. In virtue of His Person, it is argued, the revelation in Him completely transcended anything that had preceded. It was by no servant; it was by a Son. And the provision for the

[1] Weizsäcker (*Apostolic Age*, ii. 205) reaches a similar conclusion, only he finds the clue in the name "the Word of God" (xix. 13).

[2] Failing to notice this, Orello Cone (*The Gospel and its Earliest Interpretations*, p. 239) calls the double view, as others have done, an incongruity common to the author of Hebrews and to Paul, of which he says, "neither of them attempts an adjustment." Is not the probable explanation of this failure the conviction of both that they were handling assured facts, not speculative opinions, and so felt no sense of incongruity, and therefore no call to adjust?

approach of sinful man to God under the Levitical system was changed from ritual to reality by Christ's offering of Himself. But everything turns on the divine relations of this Man, Christ Jesus.

The writer is thoroughly familiar with what was then the prevalent Alexandrian mode of thought, and his language has been influenced by its terminology. But in contrast with the Philonic resolution of Old Testament personages, events, and rites into philosophic abstractions, there is in Hebrews the steady effort to show a definite relation between them and the life and experiences of a concrete individual, Jesus. There is no resort to such an idea as the Logos in order to account for Him, though the word was at the writer's hand, had he thought fit to use it. But his failure to do so is not due to his giving Jesus a lower position than that claimed by Philo for the Logos. Rather the Logos was a conception too limited, too purely speculative, for the magnificence and the reality that adhered to Him of whom he spoke. On the one hand, there were those tragic features of His earthly career which are never evaded or minimised, but rather are pressed to their full significance in order to show how close was His identification with the nature and conditions of human life.[1] No writing in the New Testament asserts more emphatically the reality of the humanity of Jesus. It is even subject to temptation, and that as a means to perfect development. The argument would fail, if this did not hold true. And it is to its pages men turn for those forceful expressions that gather up into a sentence the closeness of intimacy, and its worth for sympathy and salvation, between Jesus and His brother men (cf. ii. 10–18, iv. 15, v. 7–10). But the need

[1] "However advanced is its christology—and there it stands essentially at the highest point of the utterances of Paul—it is rich in glances back at the earthly life of Jesus, or perhaps we should rather say, at the ethical life of the Son of God, who was not ashamed to call men His brethren" (J. Weiss, *Nachfolge Christi*, p. 82).

for this statement, so strong and emphatic, is due to the exalted position which the writer has first of all accorded Him. He is above Aaron, Moses, the prophets, the angels.[1] All these are but servants, this is a Son (i. 2). In contrast with Levitical priests, here is a Priest who owes His position to no mere legal enactment, but to inherent capacity, "the power of endless—*i.e.* indissoluble—life" (vii. 15, 16; cf. John's phrase, "life in Himself"). And in this He is the archetype of all those original geniuses and benefactors of men, like Melchizedek, who owe nothing to hereditary descent or legal title, but all to what they are. His presence in this world is an episode in a career which commences before all time and outlasts its farthest bound. He is the one whom men do, or should, regard as Lord, the object of their supreme devotion, and to whom they must render an account at His glorious return as Judge. And when all this is said and admitted, surely it is mere playing with words to say that the writer still thinks of Him as something other than, less than, God; to try to escape the force of his explicit calling Him God, by telling us of possible modifications of the sense of the passage, in which he does so, as it stands in the original Hebrew from which it is quoted, when the quotation is made from the Septuagint, where it assumes a form that expressly transcends

[1] It is not fair to contend, as Ménégoz does (*op. cit.* p. 83 ff.; cf. Bruce, *Epistle to Hebrews*, chap. vi.), that all that the author is anxious to prove is that these are all kindred natures (*Esprits similaires*), among which Jesus is the superior, or to support it by an appeal to the case of men, "whom He is not ashamed to call His brethren." The whole argument of chap. ii. is that a being of one nature has assumed another nature, and has submitted to the conditions of its existence, for a definite purpose, and because complete identification is essential to the attainment of this purpose, He is not ashamed to submit to these conditions, though they are quite foreign to His own nature. His nature is that of a Son, in which He is distinct from all others. They are all servants. The highest of them is still a created intelligence. Son, in contrast with that, expressly excludes creation. Υἱός and Πρωτότοκος are cognate terms. Son suggests begetting in contrast with creation. And the distinction is this. In creation God produces something which is not Himself. In begetting He reproduces Himself in a Son. Jesus Christ is the only-begotten Son.

all such modifications.[1] The argument demands that in Jesus, as He is here represented, should be recognised one who stands to God as no other being in the universe stands, not even the highest of created intelligences. He is the Firstborn, through whom creation exists and stands. He is a Son, the Son, the effulgence of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person. And if here, as elsewhere, there clings to all language used with regard to Him an element which suggests distinction from, as well as unity with, God, that is not to be made an argument against divinity, or to annul the completeness of the unity. There is a distinction. He has associated Himself most wonderfully and completely with man. In that He is distinct from the Father. But it is a distinction for which there is room within divinity. It is quite arbitrary, and a begging of the question, to say "impossible."

From this is seen what were the views prevalent, not only in Greek circles, but also in the Jewish-Christian communities to which the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Apocalypse, both alike pregnant with Jewish sentiment and sympathy, were addressed. And to these communities, without a hint of criticism in opposition to those views, came at least one of the Synoptic Gospels, with the quiet recital of the earthly life that had produced such astounding convictions. Was such silence possible, unless all were agreed that Jesus was no less than divine?

Of course it may be said that the Epistles of James and of 1 Peter are opposed to this conclusion; that they also, as it were, bracket the Gospels and supply specimens of a much simpler Christology, the true reflex of Synoptic thought. But, in truth, the Christological references of either are too meagre and incidental to build upon. It is quite as natural to regard them as parallel in spirit to passages in Paul that do not in themselves demand the

[1] Ménégoz, *La Théologie de l'Épitre aux Hébreux*, p. 84 ff.

most exalted explanations, and which, if they stood alone, might leave us in doubt as to Paul's own view, as to assign to them only the most limited significance which they will bear. This remark applies, for instance, to the use of ὁ Κυριός in James in several passages, where to Hellenistic readers it might just as naturally suggest the Christ as Jehovah, and by the very perplexity in which he leaves us we are compelled to feel how exalted were James's views of Christ.[1] Peter and James do not, indeed, show the same magnificent comprehension of what is involved in what they thought of Christ, that Paul and John display. But that is only in line with the general inferiority in point of genius that their writings betray in comparison with those of the other two. And yet to say so is to do less than justice to Peter, across whose pages Jesus moves on the plane to which Peter raised Him in his heart, when he confessed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"; while there are phrases in his writings describing the relation of Christ to the divine forces at work in the world, which are quite impossible as applicable to a man, no matter how exalted (i. 3, 11, 20).[2] Thus any argument drawn from James and Peter loses all force.

This brings us to consider the weighty fact, that our Synoptic Gospels lie between the marvellous conceptions of Paul and of John, at once the most nearly allied in point of thought and most widely separated in point of time, the earliest and the latest expressions of apostolic Christological belief.

In attempting to present Paul's conception of Christ, it is, of course, impossible to be exhaustive. But two things ought to be noted at the outset, namely, (1) its distinctive origin, and (2) its sacred nature.

As to the former, Paul's belief about Jesus was reached

[1] Cf. what Harnack says of later Christian writings, *History of Dogma*, i. 183.
[2] Cf. Stevens, *Theology of the New Testament*, p. 298 ff.

in a way peculiar to himself. The other apostolic writers arrived at their faith in the Risen and Exalted Christ as the confirmation of a strong, loving, personal attachment cherished by them towards Jesus during His earthly life. With Paul it was the very reverse. His conversion was the decisive juncture. Then, in a moment, he learnt that the whilom Jesus, whom he had hitherto regarded with the bitterest antagonism, was the Lord of Glory. The Resurrection was a fact; Jesus was the Messiah, the Christ, and that in a sense that far transcended all that Jew had ever imagined. God had set His seal upon all the claims of Jesus, and as he sums up the situation in Rom. i. 4, if He was the Son of David according to the flesh, He was emphatically marked out as the Son of God according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead. That is the beginning of Paul's Christology, throughout which two factors are constantly present,—true humanity and true divinity,—but the dominating thought is that of Jesus as the Exalted Lord of Glory. Everything is seen in the light of that.

The origin of his thought about Christ harmonises with what I call the sacredness of the subject for Paul. He always speaks of Jesus with a holy awe and passionate devotion. In his Epistles to the Thessalonians the favourite phrase is "the Lord Jesus," as though, with all his love for the human name which brought his Lord so near, the use of it alone might let the great truth droop, that He was the Lord of All. At other times, he chiefly speaks of Him as Christ, using the word in various combinations or alone, particularly in the great fighting Epistles. And here he displays the freedom used in the case of "all or nothing." In arguing with an infidel, one may speak of God as described by an opponent contemptuously, but only to reassert with the greater reverence the glorious contrast of one's own belief. So Paul speaks of Christ.

Christ is nothing at all, or all in all. Paul ascribes a place to Him in his life, gives Him an authority over his conduct, exercises a dependence upon Him, and realises a fellowship with Him, which have simply no parallel in what any one man could ever accord to any other. They are like nothing else but the surrender, trust, and communion between a soul and its God. It is this religious attitude towards Jesus which is perhaps the most impressive argument as to Paul's view of His Person. Yet it is the argument which is most difficult to state. The gist of it is seen in passages, culled from every Epistle, such as, "I live; yet not I, Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20, 21); "The love of Christ constraineth us . . . if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature . . . God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself . . . we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us" (2 Cor. v. 14 ff.); the whole magnificent challenge at the close of Rom. viii.; the pathetic story of his prayer about his thorn in the flesh in 2 Cor. xii. 7; the outburst of passionate longing, his effort and hope for time and for eternity, in Phil. iii. 8, 9. In such, God and Christ are interchangeable terms. Give their due weight to these, and who can fairly say that, to a Jew like Paul, with his monotheistic upbringing and his persistent and expressed abhorrence of the polytheism of his day, Jesus can be less than divine? Son of God for him means something more than an official title. It states an essential fact of the nature of Jesus Christ.

But Paul has not left us in any doubt. He has stated his thought about the nature of Jesus and His relation to the Father repeatedly and in various ways. Paul maintained the existence of Christ prior to His advent into the world. Attempts to explain this away in terms of

supposed Philonic or Jewish idealism all fail in view of the activities of will and deed, which he ascribes to the pre-incarnate Christ. He played a conspicuous part in the creation of the world (1 Cor. viii. 6; Col. i. 16). As one sent by God, He hailed the mission with delight, and His conduct in undertaking it and entering the world to fulfil it is a great moral example (Phil. ii. 5 ff.). In what sense could this be said of an idea? From 1 Cor. xv. 45 ff. and Rom. v. 12 ff. it has been argued that Paul thought of Jesus as one in whom an eternally existent, divine archetype of man, *sc.* the human element in the Divine, became incarnate, and that he expresses this in the phrase, Last or Second Adam. Now, Last Adam, Second Man, is Paul's nearest equivalent for Christ's own phrase, Son of man. But it requires a little manipulation to transform Last Adam, Second Man, into First or Primal Adam. And historical sequence and the idea of a reconstitution of humanity in union with a new head are quite sufficient to explain the adjectives First and Second in 1 Cor. xv. 45–47, while there is not a suggestion there of the nature of the existence of the Second Adam prior to His appearance on earth. Something, indeed, is made of the term "man from heaven" (ver. 47). But, as its contrast ἐκ γῆς, χοϊκός (ver. 47), and the following ὁ ἐπουράνιος (ver. 48) seem to indicate, ἐξ οὐρανοῦ is indicative not so much of origin as of congenial sphere, similarly to the genitive τῶν οὐρανῶν in the phrase ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν (*vid. supra*). It is in line with the statement that the Last Adam is a quickening spirit (ver. 45), and emphasises the heavenly, *i.e.* the spiritual, as the predominant element in the new head of the race.[1]

[1] Paul's use of these terms is too limited to justify the building of theories upon them or the making of them guiding categories in Paul's thought. They are happy analogies used in passing. Holtzmann's difficulty is to establish a connection between the heavenly man "and the historic Jesus" (*Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 90). But that is only a sample of common difficulties, when such fluid terms are treated as technicalities.

At the same time this is not to be used as an argument to support a supposed identification in Paul's thought of the Son with the Divine Spirit, on the basis of 2 Cor. iii. 17.[1] Much use has been made of this text in that way on what seems defective exegesis. τὸ πνεῦμα in ver. 17 is not the Divine Spirit, as is assumed. This seventeenth verse simply resumes the dictum of ver. 6: "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life" (cf. Rom. ii. 29). The subject in hand is the New Covenant. This is the matter not of letter, but of spirit. In vv. 7–16 Paul shows at once the value and the defects of the Old Covenant, which he calls "the letter," and closes it with the quotation, "Whensoever it shall turn πρὸς Κύριον, to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." Then, immediately, he explains ὁ δὲ Κύριος τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν, the Lord is the Spirit, not meaning thereby to state the nature of the Lord, but to indicate what he wished to contrast with the ineffective Mosaic law, and regarded as entitled to be called spirit, namely, the New Covenant embodied in Christ, and the ministry that had for its subject, Jesus Christ, the Lord, "in whose face the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" shines with transforming power on the hearts of men. That he calls the spirit, τὸ πνεῦμα, in contrast with τὸ γράμμα, the letter, because of its vitalising power. We have, therefore, no statement as to the Person of Christ in ver. 17 or in the last clause of ver. 18. But we have very important light on it in the two contiguous phrases, "the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God," and "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ" (iv. 4, 6). These seem alternative, equivalent expressions, in closest harmony with the phrase in Hebrews, "the radiation of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person" (i. 3).

[1] Somerville, *St. Paul's Conception of Christ*, p. 117 ff.; Weizsäcker, *Apostolic Age*, i. 144 f.

If it is asked, where exactly, according to Paul, does Christ stand in His divine relations, the answer is supplied in the name for God, which we have already considered, and which Paul frequently uses, "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus is God's Son, and here that implies community of nature. It is no objection to say that He stands, in Paul's thought, in subordination to the Father. Just as in Hebrews, that is true. The only question is, What is the nature of the subordination? That suggested in 1 Cor. xv. 28 is clearly official. The passage, "the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor. xi. 3), also states a certain subordination, and is quoted on this ground to disprove community of nature. In reality it proves the reverse. The subject under discussion in the context is the conduct of women. And Paul's argument is that what is seemly in man may be unseemly in woman. Why? Because they have different natures? No; then there would be no perplexity. But they have the same nature, and yet because of the relation in which they stand to one another within their common humanity, what befits one does not befit the other. There are among equals positions of priority and subjection. It is with them as it is with Christ and men, in view of His assumption of their nature, or even on a loftier plane, as it is with God and Christ. The passage really attests Paul's belief at once in the true divinity of Christ, and in His relative subordination to the Father.

The whole case is stated at length in Phil. ii. 5–11. Here, for the sake of presenting an unanswerable plea for the performance of the hardest task that ever meets men, namely, the foregoing of our personal rights and privileges for the sake of others, even to the extent of becoming their servants, putting their wishes and claims before our own, Paul appeals to the conduct of Christ in His appearance upon earth and in His experiences while here. And this

moral purpose must be kept in view in studying the passage. Now what does Paul show? He presents Christ's life as reaching far beyond its earthly limits; but the section from His birth to the Cross he treats, in contrast with all the rest, as a period of humiliation. Throughout that He was in *the form of a servant.* The Cross was the climax of obedience. Paul uses two terms to describe Christ's action here: ἐκένωσεν and ἐταπείνωσεν. They describe stages in the same process. The first covers the surrender of the rights to which, as God's equal, He might have legitimately clung, but which He resigned in order to assume the form of a servant. That surrender did not affect His essential nature. It took place before He became incarnate, was, indeed, the act of will which paved the way for the Incarnation. As Gifford conclusively shows, ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων means "while originally existing, and continuing to exist, in the essential form of God."[1] The emptying, therefore, did not consist in what Sabatier wittily describes as "the heresy, at once modern and semi-pagan, of kenosis, the theory according to which the pre-existent and eternal Deity commits suicide by incarnating Himself, in order gradually to be reborn and find Himself God again at the end of His human life."[2] It was rather a divesting of Himself in heaven of what would have hindered His coming to earth, assuming here the rôle of a servant, and enduring the following humiliation as man, with the privations and hardships which the service He contemplated rendering would entail.[3] And on this the sequel throws important light. What He surrendered God restored, and more than restored. When His work as servant is complete, He becomes, not God, which He had never ceased to be, but Lord once more. This is "the name above every name at which every knee

[1] Gifford, *The Incarnation*, §§ iii. and iv.

[2] *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*, p. 142.

[3] Cf. Hall, *The Kenotic Theory*, chap. ii.; and see *Critical Review*, ix. 200 f.

shall bow, and which every tongue shall confess." Jesus Christ is Lord. But He holds His Lordship now not merely by inherent right. It is doubly His, as is delightedly owned and acknowledged by the men whose love and loyalty He has secured by such matchless services for them. And so Lord has an accent, when applied to Christ, as tender as it is imperial. Here is a passage, then, which locates and describes exactly the earthly career of Jesus. That human life, so precisely like that of any other man, was in reality the life under true earthly and human conditions of one essentially divine. It may be permitted at this point to anticipate, and to point out the striking affinity between the thought of the apostle in this passage and the use which he makes of the conditions of Christ's earthly career, and the similar procedure of Christ Himself. Paul has only repeated what Christ had already taught by word and act in His own way. It is the lesson of the feet-washing (John xiii. 1–20). It is the lesson of the repeated rebukes of the disciples' ambition. It is Paul's way of saying what Christ said, when He epitomised the lesson of His life in a single sentence, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. xx. 28). But it is also in line with the prayer in John, "Glorify Thou Me with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (John xvii. 5).

The Epistle to the Colossians and the allied passages in Ephesians carry farther the description of the dignity to which the exalted Christ returned. They meet the κένωσις just described with a description of the divine πλήρωμα, which it pleased the Father should dwell in Christ, and which now dwells in Him bodily, *i.e.* under the human conditions which He had voluntarily but permanently associated with His own existence. And written, as they were, about the same time as the Epistle to the Philippians, they only set in stronger relief the dignity of Him of whose great

self-abasement the apostle also tells. They let us see the stupendous extremes of thought of Christ that dwelt together in the mind of Paul.

In these writings the apostle had in view theosophic theories of the universe, which were exercising a pernicious fascination on the minds of some Christians, and which, while they seemed to bring principalities and powers into captivity to Christ, were really reducing Him from the peerless platform, which was His own, to their level. These theories were more or less allied with the teaching of Philo, in whom they found their loftiest expression. We are not surprised that there should have been an approximation between the teaching of Philo and that of Christ, nor, at the same time, that Paul and John would have only Christ, and none of Philo. Philo and Christ addressed themselves to the same problem, namely, the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile. Philo offered as his solution a triumph of speculative genius, his conception of the Logos, in which the loftiest philosophic thought of the Greek seemed to meet the profoundest theology of the Jew, and thus on the plane of a common intellectual belief Jew and Gentile could lay aside their differences and commence to walk side by side. To give warmth and attractiveness to the conception, he ventured on personification, which became at times so vivid as to impose on the personifier himself, and leave him in doubt whether his personification had not, after all, some measure of personal existence. The solution which Paul found in Christ was nothing so nebulous.[1] Paul saw that the root

[1] It is important to note a fundamental difference between Philo and the Christian School in reference to the Logos. The introduction of the Philonian Logos, as intermediary between God and man, was necessitated by a doctrine of the metaphysical conditions of divine and human existence, which made direct intercourse between them impossible. That thought is never even hinted at in connection with the mediatorial position of Christ, either in the teaching of Paul or of John, or anywhere else in the New Testament. The need of a mediator there is found solely in sin, an essentially ethical conception, the fruit of the abuse of man's will, not a product of his physical nature. It is also noteworthy that the Philonic Logos is never identified with the Messiah. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, i. 113.

of all antagonism between man and man was not intellectual divergence, but common spiritual antagonism to God, which reacted on the relation of man to man; and in Christ he found a definite personality, who, in Himself and by His Cross, reconciled men to God and, working thus from the spiritual and moral, destroyed all divisions among them. Paul therefore adhered to Christ (Eph. ii. 11 ff.). But this was only part, even if the part of supreme importance for man, of Christ's rôle in reference to the universe. Existing before it, He had been its Creator and its Upholder. And when He appeared on earth and accomplished the grand initial work of redemption under the conditions essential to it, the Father was not content that He should be less to His Church than He had been to the creation at the first. And so "it pleased Him, that in Him all the divine fulness should dwell." He should be head over all things to His Church, and the source of all its fulness of divine blessing. And thus, through Him, a reconstituted creation should attain its grand ideal (Col. i. 15 ff.). Here Paul's conception of Christ reaches its sublimest expression, and all other intelligences and powers, real or imaginary, are swept aside, and Christ left in a peerless eminence, where none can compete with Him, "the image of the invisible God."

This fully prepares us for the teaching of John. The prologue to his Gospel is but a restatement of Paul's view in John's way. But we are very apt to accord to his statements there a degree of significance that John himself scarcely gives them.[1] Especially has Christian thought revelled in the application of Logos to Christ in a way that John himself never did. He had used it once in the

[1] This vitiates Weizsäcker's very striking discussion of the Person of Christ, and leads him to deny the Johannine authorship of the Gospel of John, while he insists on the indispensability of apostolic (*i.e.* Johannine) countenance for the combination of the Logos doctrine with the personal belief in Christ. *Apostolic Age*, ii. 226–236.

Apocalypse (xix. 13). He uses it in the prologue, but never repeats it in the Gospel. And it is a matter of debate whether he means the same thing when it occurs once in his first Epistle (i. 1). Now, doubtless, the term is a valuable one. But as John uses it in the prologue, there is little distinctly Christian about it until ver. 14 is reached. Prior to that John moves mainly on common ground with the speculative thought of his day, Hellenic, Jewish, Oriental. All of these were more or less familiar with the Logos. And though a Philo, for instance, might have hesitated to accept ver. 1, for he speaks of a time when God existed, *πρὸ τοῦ λόγου, ὑπὲρ τὸν λόγον*,[1] still he speaks of the Logos as the Son of God, the second God, the Only-begotten, *i.e.* the unique one, the only one of His kind.[2] So bold, indeed, was his language about the Logos, that he had to ask himself, if he was not idolatrous in calling Him God. What John does, therefore, is to lay hold of this loftiest existing philosophic conception of the inner relations of the Godhead as imagined by the speculations of contemporary thought, agree with it in its boldest form, and then surprise it with the astounding announcement, "The Logos, the Word, was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John i. 14). All that others have already said of one fitted to be the Life and Light of men is true. We have found it realised in Jesus of Nazareth. He is the Incarnate Logos. This the Gospel is written to prove, or rather, to show what it means for a Christian. It means the adoring recognition of Jesus of Nazareth as in the very truest and highest sense divine.[3]

[1] Quoted by Drummond, *Philo-Judæus*, ii. 184. It is worth asking whether John may not, in the statements of chap. i. 1–3, have had Philo's positions in mind, and meant, in what he wrote, expressly to pass beyond them.

[2] On the meaning of *μονογενής* see Westcott, *Epistles of John*, p. 162.

[3] Harnack, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, i. 97; cf. *History of Dogma*, i. 97, note; McGiffert, *History of the Apostolic Age*, p. 488, note.

Now this is so universally admitted as John's view of Jesus that there is no need to dwell further on the point. It only remains to remark once more on the consensus of view as to the divinity of Jesus among the apostolic writers, and its evident acceptance among their readers. Thus, except in the Gospel of John, they never stop to prove it. They assume it. They argue from it. They show the marvellous consequences for thought about Christ, or life in fellowship with Him, which follow from it. Manifestly the common belief of the early Christian Church was that the only adequate account of the man Jesus was, that He was more than man, the God-man, God manifest in the flesh. Of course there were degrees in the vividness with which they realised what this involved. There is a marked difference, begotten of variety in the men, their modes of writing, and the circumstances they had to meet, between the simplicity of James, Peter, and the Synoptists, the rapt adoration of the Apocalypse, and the spiritual insight and genius of the Epistle to the Hebrews, of Paul, and of John. But on the points that follow they are agreed. They are agreed that Jesus was a true man; that, with the exception of sin, He was like other men; that death was not the end of His career, but that He was raised from the dead, and is now at God's right hand; that He is the present Saviour and the coming Judge of men. They believed that in all this He accomplished the true Messianic rôle, and that in Him the prophecies were fulfilled. They are equally agreed that He stood in quite a unique relation to God, was the Son of God. In various ways they have expressed their conviction that His existence began long before His presence in the world, and that He holds a relation to the world of men and of created things, vital to its very existence. They all accord Him a worship and reverence which they yield to no other but God. And their most gifted representatives use language and adopt an attitude towards

Him that place Him on the level of the highest deity. Need we hesitate in the face of all this to give the natural sense to the words when, at all hands, He is called *Κύριος*, the distinctive Greek translation of the Hebrew name for God, Jehovah, Lord; when in Hebrews, in a quotation from the Septuagint, He is addressed as God (Heb. i. 8); when in Romans He is described as God over all, blessed for ever (Rom. ix. 5); when in Titus He is called the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ (Tit. ii. 13); and when in John, in so many words, we are told not only that He is the Word that was in the beginning, and in the beginning with God, but that He the Word was God? (John i. 1). Jesus had for them the value of God. And they were unsophisticated enough to conclude that anyone who had such a value must, in the fullest sense, be God. To them to attach this value to anyone who was not God would have seemed idolatry, and they would never have thought of it. To them, this man was God, and they knew it, because He was the revelation of God and did the works of God. Is this a legitimate understanding of what Jesus said of Himself, or implied by His eloquent life?

In seeking to reach Christ's thought of Himself, we have simply to deal with the facts. We do not need to discuss the origin of His consciousness. And if, as is pretty generally admitted, there is no indication of development of His self-consciousness after the Baptism, but then it is complete, it is futile to speculate as to what must have been the processes of reflection prior to that by which Jesus arrived at His convictions as to Himself. For one thing, we have no direct evidence, and in spite of plausibility, the most successful attempt is only a speculation. And for a second, it is speculation vitiated by a serious defect. If His self-consciousness is what it is represented even at the very lowest, while truly human, it includes an element which has no exact counterpart in the conscious-

ness of other human beings, and it attains a result different from that reached by any other human being. It is strictly unique, and you cannot successfully argue from the origin and development of the ordinary to the origin and development of the unique. If analogy is employed, the result is somewhat unexpected. How does a man know himself to be the son of his own father? Does it not depend on the witness of the father? And the witness to which, in John, Christ constantly appeals as abidingly afforded to Him, and as accessible to others on His behalf, is the witness of the only one of whom He ever speaks, even from His earliest years, as His Father, namely, God. That is the unique feature about His consciousness. Analogy seems to confirm—if its evidence is worth anything—the old-fashioned conviction as to Christ's original essence.

To get at Christ's thought as to Himself, we may commence with the Temptation. That narration must be autobiographical, and carries that value for us. The temptation proceeds on the assumption that Christ thought Himself the Son of God (Matt. iv. 3, 6; Luke iv. 3, 9). That conviction of His own mind had just been confirmed to Himself, and attested to the Baptist, by the voice from heaven (Matt. iii. 16, 17; Luke iii. 21, 22). It was with the full consciousness of this that He was now prepared to adopt publicly the Messianic rôle. And the Tempter understood that for Jesus His relation to God was the fundamental fact of His Being. That assumption he does not attempt to challenge. He aims instead at provoking an abuse of the privileges that would naturally accrue to the Son of God, and so at rendering the Incarnation abortive by diverting Messianic activity into wrong lines at the very start. And this is how Jesus regards the temptation. He does not repudiate the Sonship supposed. But He at once and decisively refuses to seek a Messianic kingdom along the devil's lines. Self-indulgence, vulgar display, methods

of force and fraud He sets sternly aside as hateful to any self-respecting, humble, God-fearing heart. He will live His life and do His work under the strictly human conditions, and remain within the restrictions of the human life, which He, the Son of God, had assumed. And what He did then, He maintained to the end, when He repelled Peter's dissuasive at Cæsarea Philippi (Matt. xvi. 22, 23), bade him in the garden sheathe his sword, though conscious that legions of angels were at His call (Matt. xxvi. 52), and heard, unheeding, from the Cross the challenge from His foes, "If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross, . . . and we will believe Thee" (Matt. xxvii. 39–43). He wanted no such belief. If men were to discover the divinity within, it must be through the peerless excellence found in Him amid the lowliest conditions of human life. John expresses the realisation of Christ's desire in the experience of his fellow-disciples and himself. "He tabernacled among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John i. 14).

It is quite in line with this, that what was first in Christ's mind was last in order of express admission to men. It is only at the very end of His career that He openly and fully accepts from men the name, Son of God, though over and over again, in the course of His career, the title was offered to Him. There were, however, two great exceptional occasions, the Baptism and the Transfiguration. There the voice that accords it is God's. And the words are full of Old Testament reminiscence, weaving together the thoughts of Ps. ii. and Isaiah's Servant of Jehovah. These occasions were doubtless welcome to Jesus; though they were intended, in large measure, to guide the action of John the Baptist and of the disciples respectively. The wild cries of demoniacs to this effect Jesus sternly silenced, refusing to accept testimony from such a source. And

other occasions were, so to say, privileged and private, not public announcements. This reserve, however, did not arise from any hesitancy in Christ's mind as to His claims. It was for the truth of them He ultimately died.[1] Jesus was not really crucified because He claimed to be the Messiah, but because He claimed to be the Son of God. Of course, in saying that, I do not mean to suggest that the real secret of the determined antagonism of the Jewish rulers to Jesus, and their resolve to slay Him at all costs, was not due to the fact that He claimed to be Messiah, but refused to be a Messiah after their pattern, refused to be a mere political tool in their hands, took His stand for far-reaching, spiritual renovation, in which pride, formality, and love of worldly gear must succumb to humility, sincerity, and self-sacrifice. But in that there was no offence against the Jewish Law. They expected a Messiah. There was no offence against Judaism in any man claiming to be Messiah. It would all depend on his being able to make good his claim. Rome might assail him for treason on that score, but not Judaism. But had Rome alone had to deal with Jesus, its verdict is known—"Not guilty." He was King of a kind that did not concern Rome any more than the Queen of the May concerns our Queen. It was Judaism that condemned Jesus. And why, slips out from His accusers' lips, when, on hearing Pilate's verdict, "I find no crime in Him," the fury of malice, like to be baulked, blurts out its inmost thoughts: "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God" (John xix. 7). And this, it is plain from the earlier charge, meant something different from Messiah (John xviii. 33 ff.). Now that was exactly what Caiaphas had elicited from Christ's own lips as evidence against Himself, when every other

[1] McGiffert (*History of the Apostolic Age*, p. 28), says less than the truth when he sums up the situation thus: "When Jesus was executed, it was as a distinct claimant to the Messianic dignity." But his treatment of the mission of Jesus is so utterly inadequate that his book would be improved by its omission.

attempted charge had broken down (Matt. xxvi. 63; Mark xiv. 61). It was on that they condemned Him, because they counted it blasphemy. That shows at once what they understood, and what Jesus understood, by "Son of God." It was a relationship to God of such a kind that for any ordinary man to claim it was to impinge on the sacred prerogatives of God and to bring them into contempt. It was, in other words, to claim to be divine. That was what they meant, and what Jesus meant. It was a moment of too intense feeling for anything but perfect candour of thought and utterance on both sides. And from the terms in which Jesus couches His reply, "Thou hast said: nevertheless, from henceforth ye shall see the Son of man," etc. (Matt. xxvi. 64), it is plain that it was because of what they regarded as the irreconcilable contradiction between His humanity and His claim to be Son of God, that they refused to believe it. What they could not reconcile, Jesus did. But their difficulty shows us conclusively the sense in which both understood the words.

This becomes all the more plain when we recall the passionate earnestness with which Jesus always repudiated the charge of blasphemy, repeatedly made against Him. He felt that it was something more than an insult to say that He cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. It was itself on the very verge of blasphemy, because it betrayed wilful blindness to the Divine Spirit that was at work with and in Him, and which might easily have been discerned even by men, who could not penetrate the disguise of His humanity. At Matt. ix. 3 we see that what dictated the care with which He there justified His claim to forgive sins was the fact that some said it was blasphemy. John x. 32 ff. has another most striking instance. On the ground of the claim, "I and My Father are one," which His enemies regarded as His making Himself, a man, equal with God, and therefore blasphemy, they were on

the point of giving Him a blasphemer's death by stoning. Christ indignantly repudiated the charge, and that, not by withdrawing His statement, but by emphasising His right to make it, because some even in the Old Testament had been called Gods, and He, as Son of God, stood on an infinitely higher plane than they. Blasphemy He would not confess to, even when asserting His claims in the presence of men who interpreted them, and that without any abatement of them from Him, in their very highest sense.

We see, then, what Jesus meant when He accepted the title, Son of God. But it was not a title He was in the habit of using with regard to Himself. There is another name, which was His own private name for Himself, namely, Son of man. Here again, however, a certain reserve is observable. Whatever He meant by it, He did not use it with any frequency in the earlier months of His public ministry. Dalman sums up his results from a study of the use of the phrase in these words: "It is not impossible, though not certain, that Jesus never, prior to Peter's confession and the teaching given by Jesus to His disciples then as to His future fate, called Himself the Son of man."[1] Now what are we to understand by that name? Without going the full length with Dalman, we must approach it from the fact just stated, that its use was comparatively rare until after Peter's confession. But there is another fact equally observable. From the first Jesus demands attention to Himself. Without saying who He is, He teaches with an authority which everywhere calls for remark. He speaks about the nature, will, and ways of God with a familiar confidence that surprises men. He even speaks of Himself as the Judge before whom they shall give account at the Last Day. He shows Himself to be possessed of extraordinary control over the powers of earth and air

[1] *Die Worte Jesu*, i. 216.

and sea, over sickness and death. And though some of the most arresting miracles occur in the last months of His life, yet they are performed with greatest lavishness and frequency at the very first; later, He seems to stay His hand. It is as these remarkable facts have served their purpose, and won for Him that place in public attention which He desired, and when consequently men were asking on all hands who He was, that He begins to use this name for Himself, the Son of man. What does He mean by it?

It seems fairly well established that Son of man was not a common current Messianic term. There were Old Testament passages, where the phrase occurred, which might possess a certain Messianic suggestiveness to meditative minds, such as Ps. viii. and Dan. vii. 13. And when once it had been appropriated by the Messiah, other passages would acquire a new, like significance to His followers. But as far as contemporary feeling was concerned, this was a secondary element in the term. In ordinary usage it was an Aramaic equivalent both for man, member of the human race, and for "son of man."[1] And the Greek phrase is to be interpreted from the Aramaic usage.

What is the meaning, then, of Christ adopting this as His self-designation, when men, by reason of His arresting words and works, are inclined to think of Him as something vastly greater? It was this. He was accomplishing the true work of the Messiah. But, owing to the prevalent misconceptions of Messiahship, He was slow to accept the title, the Christ. It would only have pushed mistaken notions farther in the wrong direction, and fostered the spirit which He so peremptorily checked, when they sought, within a few days of Peter's confession, to take Him by force and make Him a king (John vi.). Their

[1] But see Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu*, *sub voce*; *Expos. Times*, x. 438 ff., xi. 62 ff.

ideas about Him were extravagant, rather than exalted. So He deliberately took a name that would compel them to remember that He was man, true man, so much man that He felt entitled to call Himself conspicuously *the* Man, the Son of man. Whatever else He might be, He was this. If He had made bold claims, exerted unprecedented influence, done as none other had done, and if He contemplated still further claims for Himself, a coming even as Judge of all mankind, still it was all at least as man. "Son of man" is Christ's emphatic reminder of His humanity, reminder of His humility indeed—but also when thus appropriated by Him, it becomes a revelation of the glorious possibilities there are for humanity, if once, like His, it be delivered from sin and united with God.

This holy jealousy of His own divine nature, lest perception of it should, in any way, prejudice the perfect confidence of men in the completeness of His assumption of their nature and identification of Himself with their interests, which led to His reserve in the statement of it at the outset of His ministry, to His placing of an embargo on the promulgation of it whenever it was perceived, and to the adoption of the name, Son of man, as descriptive of its equally important complement, is emphasised by the forecast He immediately makes of what is in store for Him, as soon as ever He has accepted Peter's God-inspired confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." From that day forward commenced the solemn and repeated prediction, that He must be betrayed and crucified, and the third day rise again (Matt. xvi. 21; Mark viii. 31; Luke ix. 21 f.). It was the lesson He was constantly inculcating, but which, in the first instance, His followers were slow to learn, and found hard to understand (Luke xviii. 34). They either, with James and John, belittled the tragic, dazzled by the prospects of the Resurrection (Matt. xx. 20 ff.; Mark x. 35 ff.), or they were so overwhelmed by the tragedy, that

they were afraid to inquire about it, lest Jesus should more than verify their worst fears (Mark ix. 32). They could not accept, with Christ, both facts without exaggerating one of them to the prejudice of the other. But this only confirms our impression of the difficulty Jesus had to encounter in revealing Himself, and of the need He felt for balanced statement to secure the whole truth for each side.

This same process is seen in connection with the strongest statement as to Himself which is to be found in the Synoptics (Matt. xi. 25–30; Luke x. 21, 22). There He gives a justification of the new way in which He had taught men to think of God, namely, as above everything else a Father. And in doing so, He has made a great claim for Himself.[1] He has taught men to think of God as their Father, because He knew Him as His own Father, and knew so as only a son could know. He bases the knowledge on the relationship, and He states the relationship as something quite unique. All attempts to resolve it into a unique degree of moral and spiritual affinity, perfection of filial love and obedience, which differs only in degree, not in kind, from the relation which other men may bear to God, fail to afford the guarantee for the reliability of His revelation, which Christ's appeal to it demands. It is relationship within the peculiar essence of Deity that qualifies for making a revelation to men about the heart of God. It is that relationship which Jesus speaks of as that of the Son, and as His. It belongs to Him essentially, and to Him alone. It is not found in ordinary human nature. But Jesus has no sooner made this statement than He follows it up with an invitation, couched in terms so tender, so yearning, and so sincere, that the isolation of His uniqueness, His divinity, vanishes in the throbbing heart of His humanity, "Come unto Me . . . for I am

[1] Here is the prototype of the position claimed for Christ at the outset of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

meek and lowly." And one does not know which to admire most—the meekness and the lowliness of the offerer, or the magnificence of the promise that comes from the throne of His lowliness to the subjects who will crown Him King.

This passage in the Synoptics is the connecting link on this subject between them and the Gospel of John. We have here a saying of Jesus which is on all fours with the most exalted claims attributed to Him in John. In John's Gospel we do not, of course, miss the human side of Christ. But it was written for the explicit purpose of proving, in the first instance, that Jesus was the Son of God (John xx. 31). And John has selected those incidents in the life of Jesus and those utterances of His lips, which are especially fitted to bring this into prominence, and to let us see where He and His fellow-disciples discerned the glory shining through the human veil (John i. 14; 1 John i. 1–4). John thought that what He quoted would bear the construction, and justify his contention. That, however, only makes it the more significant, that we still see the Jesus of the Synoptics, here as there regarded by men as the son of Joseph (i. 45), surrounded by a circle of unbelieving kith and kin (vii. 1–8), filled with the most tender solicitude for His mother, Mary (xix. 26 f.). He is the same toiling, weary, wistful, sympathetic wayfarer and worker (iv. 6), hungering for human sympathy (vi. 67), appalled at the prospect of spiritual conflict (xii. 23–28), and clinging for support in the hour of desertion and isolation to the unfailing presence of His trusted heavenly Father (xvi. 32). He is still the Son of man who must die, lifted up, even if it is to draw all men unto Him. But over against that, He is one who makes the most astounding claims both as to His personal position and His personal significance for the spiritual welfare of others. To read the list of *Ἐγώ*s and what they say, is to feel that here is either the world's greatest victim of inordinate

vanity, or else a soul possessed by the mightiest spiritual force that has ever touched humanity. He is greater than Abraham, Jacob, or Moses, Israel's greatest names (viii. 53–58, iv. 12 ff., vi. 32 ff.). He is, even as Son of man, in intimate touch with Heaven (iii. 13). And again and again the passage from Son of man to Son of God, in the description of Him, is so artless and natural, that it is impossible to say which name is more appropriate. Is the Son of God to be Judge of men? It is because He is Son of man (v. 26, 27). Is the Son of man to be glorified? It is by the return of the Son of God to the glory which He had with the Father before the world was (xii. 23; cf. xvii. 5).

In the third chapter of this Gospel, immediately after Christ's statement to Nicodemus of His own qualification as Son of man for conveying a revelation of heavenly things, and of the conditions to which He had to submit in order to become the medium of eternal life to men, there comes a quick explanatory statement at the opposite pole of the secret of His presence in the world. He is the only-begotten Son of God, sent into the world for this very purpose. But the transition is so quick that some cannot believe that they are words of Jesus Himself, and not a comment by John. Be it so; but John is then only putting into this connection what Jesus repeatedly stated of Himself, that He was God's Son, sent by the Father. Never for a moment does Jesus disguise the dependence of the Son on the Father. When in the fifth chapter He justifies a Sabbath cure by an appeal to His Father's example, and that so emphatically that the Jews sought to kill Him, because in saying so He called God His own Father and made Himself equal with God, Jesus does not deny that; He only proceeds to explain the mutual relations of the Father and the Son. All the Son's activities are determined by the example and commission of the

Father, but these are bestowed by a Father's love,—love which exists on the basis of that relation, and gives without stint. This is the secret of His already marvellous deeds, and of those still to follow, the reviving of humanity spiritually dead, the raising of the dead from their graves, and the fulfilment of the office of Judge of all, —all designed by the Father to secure for the Son equal honour with Himself. True, it depends on the Father; but what of dependence is here stated only makes the more arresting the claims made in keeping with it. It is the same in the discourse on the bread of Life (chap. vi.), where eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man is the alternative expression for beholding the Son and believing on Him, the one in whom alone men can see the Father, and either of these expresses the one condition of eternal life and resurrection at the last day.

Chaps. vii.–x. give two discourses at successive feasts where Jesus discusses His own Person with great fulness. At the first, replying to the Jews' astonishment at His learning, Christ attributes it to His origin from God. He is fit to be the source of spiritual life and the Light of the World because of His mission from the Father, and the tragic end to which they would devote Him would have such an issue that they would thereby get the answer to their question, "Who art Thou?" He, as Son, is the true liberator, through whom men can obtain the liberty of sons of God, which means no mere national privilege, but moral likeness to God and sympathetic recognition of every son of God, pre-eminently of Him who says, "I came out of God Himself, and am now here; nor have I come of Myself, but I am His messenger" (viii. 42).[1] His truth He guarantees by His unchallengeable sinless-

[1] This is the striking translation of the Twentieth Century New Testament. Indeed, the testimony of that translation to the Divinity of Christ is very impressive. See especially translation of John i. 1–18.

ness, and on faith in Him depends the eternal life of man. And when this claim is set down to madness and arrogance, He is not staggered by proposed comparison with even the great father of the race, but solemnly avows, "Before Abraham was, I am." All attempts to explain away the force of this are hopeless. As Westcott says, "There can be no doubt as to this final answer, which follows as a natural climax to what had been said before. Abraham died; Christ was the Giver of life: Abraham was the father of the Jews; Christ is the centre of Abraham's hope: Abraham came into being as a man: Christ is, essentially, as God."[1] And when we recall the name of God given at the bush to Moses ("I am"), there is something arresting in that grandly simple ἐγὼ εἰμί, I am.

After a lapse of a few weeks, Jesus is again at Jerusalem, and over the healing of a blind man the question is raised again as to His Person. To the blind man himself He announces that He is the Son of God.[2] This had been overheard, or at least it found its equivalent and explanation in a claim which He made forthwith, "I and My Father are one." It is the justification of His claim to be the coming Judge and Light of the World, the Good Shepherd, ready to lay down His life for the sheep and beloved of His Father for this rare devotion; and if men, not content with this, still ask, "If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly," He appeals to the safety of those in His safe keeping, in His hand, God's hand, "I and My Father are one." As we have already seen (p. 243), there is no resiling by Him from the inference His audience drew. There is only a plea for its belief in view of His works, which witness to the fact that the Father is in Him and He in the Father in a

[1] Westcott, *Commentary on John, in loco.*

[2] So A.V., as, with Godet, *in loco*, I think rightly.

union so deep-seated and real as fully to warrant Him calling Himself the Son of God. Can any purely human conception do justice to these claims? In Him there is something infinitely above this world's ordinary inhabitants even at their best. Only among the heavenlies can His compeer be found, in His Father who sent Him—God.

This all leads straight to the answer which removes Philip's difficulty, "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father," and paves the way for an explanation of the new form which prevailing prayer must take, "in My name," and of the secret of His continued manifestation of Himself to men, after He has gone to the Father. That will be effected, as God effects it: "If a man love Me, He will keep My words; and My Father will love him: and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John xiv. 23). He states the same fact in other terms. The presence of the Divine Spirit is the equivalent of His presence. Through that Spirit the disciples will receive more and more of the things of Christ, and He claims that all that is God's is His own. Could there be a more complete identification of Himself with God? The Son touches the Father at every point. Imagine for one moment the same thing said of any other human being. It is impossible, incredible. And it is just as incredible, if said of any other created being, any being in essence less than divine. Yet Jesus says this, and says it of Himself. It is to His words, as given by John, we here appeal,—words which lived again in John's memory, when old age blotted out the interval, but revived with all the freshness of yesterday the arresting events of his youth. They are words that say so much that they provoked the charge of blasphemy at the time, and on any supposition but one they are blasphemous. Had Jesus never said them or anything like them, and had John invented

them, we must have treated John as the gravest traducer of His Master's name. But as Jesus said them, and as John recalled and understood them with the full light of the Resurrection upon them, they bear no taint of blasphemy, nor ever did, but speak the words of truth and soberness. With all this to go upon, it is superfluous to expose again the makeshifts by which it has been attempted to get rid of the pre-existence claimed in viii. 58 and xvii. 5. We have Jesus' own word for it that it was out of an existence of real, glorious fellowship with God that He came to fulfil Messiah's part here, and that when He left the earth again, it was a return to glory.

All this, of course, is ampler far than anything we find in the Synoptics. Indeed, it seems at variance with the reserve or even silence which Jesus seemed there to maintain on this conviction of His own mind. But it is necessary to remember that the larger part of John's Gospel, all from chap. vii. onwards, applies to the later months of Christ's career. In what precedes, in chap. iii. for instance, it is a question whether it is John or Jesus who speaks of Him as Son of God. In chaps. v. and vi. His references to Himself are the result of challenge, based on the intimacy He claimed with God as His Father. In the former of these chapters, too (chap. v.), in His reply to the charge of making Himself equal with God because He called God His own Father, the earlier part (vv. 19–29) might very easily sound as a theoretic statement of the divine relations. Save for the personal hint at ver. 24, it is all in the third person. And when at ver. 30 He by implication applies it to Himself, it is to follow it up by an appeal to witnesses to prove that He Himself was sent by the Father. And that is just how He represents Himself in the Synoptics. In the other chapter (chap. vi.), though He does by implication, but not expressly, call Himself the Son, *sc.* of God,

He yet keeps His humanity so persistently in the foreground that His hearers cannot find the clue to His claims, and turn away in unbelief. So, after all, John is not out of line with the method attributed to Jesus in the Synoptics. Here again there is reserve. And John's mass of proof for what he asserts is got, where we should expect it, from the closing weeks and days. And Jesus justifies His disciple's assertion. He makes good His claim to be the Son of God. It is His fundamental thought about Himself. And I would go farther than Professor Stevens, and say that His thought is "primarily ontological"; and Professor Stevens's own words, which immediately follow, seem to involve this. Quite true, it is "ethical," "a reciprocal and dynamic fellowship," but "His work for men is grounded in what He is," not on what He enjoys in virtue of what He is.[1]

How, then, does Christ's conception of Himself agree with the conceptions of His followers? It lies at the root of them all. One is at once struck with the remarkable correspondence between Jesus and Paul. Their initial thought is the same. They reach it, of course, in different ways. To Paul it comes by the vision of the Lord in glory. But Jesus is for him, just as He was for Himself, first of all the Son of God, the Lord of Glory. It is from that His Messiahship follows. It is in the light of that they both regard the career on earth. And if Paul pushes the significance of Jesus as the Son of God into spheres where Jesus Himself never carried it, that is not due to any departure from Christ's thought. It is simply because Jesus had no occasion to pursue the lines to which Paul felt himself called, and for which he found the needed materials in Christ. But, beginning where Jesus Himself began, Paul also looks at the life of Jesus on earth just as Jesus Himself looked at it. Jesus is for

[1] *Theology of the New Testament*, p. 204.

Paul not less strictly human than any son of man. He is bound to humanity by the closest ties of kinship. He fulfilled the position of servant, as do His brethren. And yet, at the same time, there is a degree of other-worldly perfection about Him that makes Paul call Him, if not the Son of man, yet something that expressed much of the same thought, but with a tone of the reverence which makes him shrink from using words Jesus did not hesitate to apply to Himself—he called Him the Second Adam—one of us, that is, truly one of us, but the best, our new Head. The others, as we have seen, arrived at their highest conceptions of Christ in the opposite direction. They commenced with the humanity and rose to the divinity. But when they did perceive it, their views correspond with those of Jesus and of Paul. John's picture of Christ is so interwoven with Christ's own picture of Himself, given in John, that it is an over-refinement to distinguish sharply between them. But He does distinguish. Jesus never calls Himself the Logos, nor, even when traversing the inner relations of Father and Son, does He resort to any philosophic terminology to explain Himself. But we have seen that even when John does this, it is by way of accommodation and in a merely prefatory and apologetic way, and not as an essential factor in his thought of Christ. As to James and Peter, we have seen that we have too little to go upon to set them in opposition to the others. And there practically only remain the Synoptists. Dalman[1] draws this distinction between their view of Son of God and Christ's own. Their mode of thought, he says, is Greek; that of Jesus, Semitic. And he explains that, by saying that "Jesus uses the expression (Son of God), first of all, in reference to His present relation to God, and only permits us a glimpse that His origin is one that corresponds with this

[1] *Die Worte Jesu*, p. 237.

position, while the Synoptists set the last-named point at the basis of the sense of the expression." His proof is based on the fact, that for the Greek in his own language, Son had nothing like that range of significance which it had in Aramaic for the Jew. But is that a proof of what the Synoptists thought? Two of them were not Greeks. Besides, we have seen that it was in His relation to God as Son that Jesus realised His call to be Messiah. Hence though it be true that He does apply the title Son of God to His present relation to God, it is over-refining to treat that as the sole reference, or as if it so predominated in His mind as to indicate a racial distinction of thought between Him and His recorders.

The result we arrive at is that we possess a homogeneous picture. The germ of the various presentations are all found in Christ Himself. The form of each is determined by the immediate circumstances which it is to meet. And the latest, most mature, and most transcendent developments are the nearest approach to the original thought of the Divine Prototype. It took time for men's eyes to discern the magnitude and brilliancy of the sun which had arisen in their heaven. But the work He accomplished in themselves and in the world around them, and the influence He exerted, which was not spent or diminished, but vastly increased as the years stretched out between His presence on earth and their own day, confirmed the most exalted ideas which His words and acts had suggested. His peerless humanity was that of the Incarnate Son of God.

CHAPTER VII

The Intentions of the Cross, Hinted and Grasped

In Christ's Teaching the Cross follows that about Himself—"Christ" is an official Title—His Personality His Claim to Messiahship, not *vice versâ*—This understood by His Apostles—Value of His Death lies in His Person—Order to be followed here: Christ's Teaching first, and why.

Christ's Teaching about His Death—His Difficulty—(1) Facts elucidative of His Estimate of it—He predicted it, experienced growing Emotion in the Anticipation of it, connected it with His Resurrection, regarded it as at once a Murder and a Self-surrender—(2) Light thrown on His Purpose in it by His Views of Life and Death—Inevitable Effect of Old Testament View of Suffering on Christ—His own Sayings on the Place of Suffering in Life—The original Function He attributes to Death in Life—(3) His explicit Utterances—(*a*) His Predictions of His Death—(*b*) His Description of His disposal of His Life as λύτρον—Sacrificial Element in λύτρον—(*c*) The Institution of the Supper—Does Covenant here refer only to Ex. xxiv.?—Significance of His Selection of Paschal Feast for Time of His Death—(4) Additional Light from John's Gospel—Wendt's abortive Attempt to reduce force of Johannine Evidence—A homogeneous Conception.

Reproduction of Christ's Teaching by the Apostles.—(1) The Synoptics emphasise its Connection with the Resurrection and its supreme Importance—(2) The Acts enforces the Crime of it—(3) Paul's Views—Points of direct Affinity of Sentiment with Christ—Develops the Necessity for Redemption by the Death of Christ (Galatians)—God's Requirement, and consequent need of a Representative (2 Cor. v. 11–21)—Rom. v. 11–21 brings out the Principle which makes Treatment of Sin through a Representative legitimate—Rom. iii. 19-26 shows how Christ fulfils the Part—Meaning of ἱλαστήριον—How applicable to Christ—What gave Value to Christ's Death, and how it avails—Significance of Union with Christ for this Subject—Succeeding Epistles—Reason for comparative Silence—Relation of Paul's Doctrine to Christ's—(4) Peter accords with Paul—But emphasises Example in Christ's Work—(5) Hebrews presents Christ's Work as

that of a High Priest—Suggestion of this in Χριστός—Represents Effects in Terms of this Idea—The Author's Motive—His Point of Departure the Intercessory Prayer in John xvii.—(6) John presents Christ as the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sin of the World by virtue of His Sacrifice—Justification of this View—Isa. liii. 6—The Lamb of Apocalypse is sacrificial—The Verdict of Caiaphas attests it—Its expiatory Value—Emphasises chiefly sanctifying Effects—but Terms include Expiation of Guilt—Summary.

WHEN Christ had familiarised men's thoughts with the truth about His own nature, the next stage of His teaching was the unfolding of the fact that He must submit to death, must carry identification with human nature to its extreme limit, give up His life in death. He predicted the tragedy in which He foresaw this would eventuate, namely, betrayal into the hands of His enemies and crucifixion by them. This is the subject we have now to study, first seeking to understand in what light He regarded these prospective sufferings, and what effects He expected to flow from them, and then asking whether His followers have been true to His leading, when they made of them the very essence of the mission and work of Christ.

We have already noted that Messiah, or Christ, was a title descriptive of the vocation, not elucidative of the Person, of Jesus.[1] And Jesus treated it in this way. It was the word which enshrined the Jewish hope of a deliverer, sent from God to introduce and set up the Kingdom of God. And that was exactly the work which Jesus had come to effect. But just as He had to transform the conception of the kingdom, so also had He to transform the conception of the Messiah. And for this reason He practises a reserve in the use of the name for Himself, which is as marked as is that in the use of the name Son of God. He could speak freely of the kingdom without incurring

[1] It should be noted, however, that in John's Gospel and Epistles Χριστός is frequently used as equivalent to *υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ*, and takes its meaning from the latter phrase; cf. i. 17, 18, iii. 28, cf. 31, I. i. 5, etc. Cf. Erich Haupt, *Commentary on 1 John* iv. 2, p. 209 (German edition).

risk. He could not do the same with the acceptance of the title Messiah. To have claimed to be Messiah at the outset would, to the Jews at anyrate, have seemed to be a putting of Himself at the head of a political movement. He had first to eliminate the gross elements from the idea of the kingdom, and then, by the impress of His character, lead men to ask, whether He were not Messiah of such a kingdom as He depicted, ere He could encourage that belief. If ever He was to accept the title, He must interpret what He meant by it, not they.

For Jesus His personality as God-man constituted His right to assume the name Messiah, not His vocation as Messiah His pretext for regarding Himself as Son of God.[1] That is what He implies in His question, "What think ye of the Christ? Whose Son is He?" He knew the reply He would receive—"The Son of David." The contemporary Jew looked first of all in his Messiah for signs of pure Davidic descent. To Jesus, descendant of David as He was, that was non-esssential. It was accidental:—"If David call Him Lord, whence is He his son?" (Matt. xxii. 42, 43). It is right to Lordship over even David, that is of supreme moment. In the nature of His own personality He knew He possessed that right. And ultimately He did claim the title; but He put His own meaning into it, and interpreted it from the secrets of His own being. That this was the movement of His mind is plain from the reply sent to John the Baptist. Whether John's question expressed a perplexity of John's own mind—and I think it did—or not, it certainly voiced what was a common mis-

[1] Cf. Matheson, *Studies of the Portrait of Christ*; H. J. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 272 f. Baldensperger maintains the opposite, or rather refuses to admit the alternative. The two, he says, came to Christ's consciousness simultaneously. Previously to His certainty that He was Messiah, He was still not yet the Son of God. Cf. *Selbstbewusstsein Jesu*, p. 221 f. But how could the realisation of a conviction as to His vocation produce a change in His person? Or are Son of God and Messiah identical terms? Baldensperger does not treat them so.

giving among those who were inclined to be well disposed towards Jesus. Seeing Him pursue a line so different from what their interpretation of prophecy had led them to expect, finding Him use the fan, with which He was expected to purge the threshing-floor and gather the chaff for burning, only to bring feeble sparks to a flame of love and faith, they could scarcely believe He was the Messiah. For answer Jesus only emphasised, by special activity in the same line at the moment of reply, the deliberateness of the method He had adopted, and bade men take no offence at Him. He knew who He was, and what He was doing. Let them await developments (Matt. xi. 2–6; Luke vii. 19–23). In time developments came, which seemed to confirm the darkest misgivings. His life went out in death, shameful and accursed. Is not this final? No, for He rose again, and now He gives his clue to the perplexities. He sets in the foreground that aspect of Messianic experience, which an easy optimism had overlooked, but which was of supreme import. On the way to Emmaus and in the upper room that same evening, He makes the hearts of the disciples burn with a glow of wonder and delight, as He answers for them from the Scriptures the startling question, "Ought not the Messiah to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" (Luke xxiv. 25, 26, 44–47). His Person and His experience are the clue to what constitutes Messiahship, and the adumbrations of prophecy must be explained in the light of their fulfilment by Him.[1]

With this attitude of Christ His followers entirely coincide. They use Messiah or Christ of Jesus just as freely as He avoided it. They use it so constantly that it became practically a proper name for Him. But they do so because "Christ" ceased for them to mean anything else than what they found in Jesus. If asked what it meant, any one of them would have replied by giving the facts about Jesus

[1] Cf. Stanton, *The Jewish and the Christian Messiah*, p. 149 ff.

of Nazareth. If, in writing to Jews, they seek to prove that in Him prophecy was fulfiled, they do it, not by showing that His life conforms to the lines laid down for the Messiah in the interpretations of prophecy, common among the Jews. They do mention certain occasions, critical junctures (Matt. xxi. 1 ff.), at which Jesus deliberately acted in detail as the prophet had foretold. Such was the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, when He was anxious to bring things to a definite and final issue; and the meaning of His action was too eloquent to be mistaken. But, in the main, the evangelists describe the actual course of His life, and appeal to a truer reading of prophecy to justify the way in which He had revolutionised the Messianic idea, and filled it with a new content.

If what has been said is true, if His consciousness of Himself as the incarnate Son of God was for Jesus His call to Messiahship, only then are we loyal to His thought, when we endeavour to interpret His work in the light of that fact. As we saw, the aim of His work was Salvation, —salvation rendered necessary by the rupture, through the entrance of sin, of man's proper relation to God. Now, if Jesus felt that as God-man He possessed the qualifications for achieving this result, and on the ground of this claimed to be the true Messiah, it must have been because in virtue of His nature He found Himself completely qualified to represent the mind of God, and at the same time, from within and by experience, thoroughly to understand the thoughts of men, and to enlist their love and confidence. In virtue of the union of God and man in Him, He was able to represent God to men as He really is, and that under a form which men could understand, *i.e.* in terms of humanity. He was able to say, "He that hath seen *Me*, hath seen the Father." He was also able, in virtue of the perfection of His humanity and of the principle of human solidarity, which He so well understood, to assume the

position of their true representative, *the* Son of man. His whole earthly career, therefore, is official. It is to introduce an irrelevancy to ask whether His Messianic work commenced before, or at, or after His death.[1] He is the Messiah. Anything He does, possesses Messianic significance. And if, with growing impressiveness, He points to the value of His *death*, and if His apostles, from the very first, concentrate their atttention upon that, still it is not simply the death, but the fact that it is *His* death, that gives it such importance.

In studying this subject, we shall proceed in the opposite way from that followed under the previous topic. There we worked from the apostles to Christ Himself. Here, we shall commence with Christ, and proceed to His apostles. The reason is, that the utterances of Christ on this subject, though very important, are scanty.[2] It is His followers who enlarge upon it. On this Jesus was eloquent in action, not in speech. He bore the Cross to Calvary, and there He died. And, with a few pregnant suggestions, He chiefly left the fact to sink deep into the hearts of men and speak there for itself. It was a marvellous service on their behalf. It was the cost of a great forgiveness. And, as Dr. Forsyth has beautifully said, while it would ill become those who by experience have learned its value to keep silence on such a theme, on the other hand, for Him who paid it to dwell on the cost, and to do so while paying it, would have been to rob the

[1] While Messiahship is an office, it is an office which is personal, and which can never be dissociated from the person. McGiffert (*History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*, p 43f.), in his anxiety to prove that to the apostles Jesus only became Messiah after the resurrection, seems to forget Peter's confession, and the line of argument in the early speeches in the Acts. There the Jews are charged with having crucified the Lord's Anointed. This charge would be manifestly unfair if Jesus never was thought of as Messiah till after His resurrection and ascension.

[2] There is great force in Dr. Robertson's remark: "The remarkable thing is that Jesus says so much of His death by anticipation, and attaches so much significance to it. It is not a usual thing for a great teacher to make his own death his subject" (*Our Lord's Teaching*, p. 90).

grace of its graciousness, to impair its wonder, amplitude, and spell.[1]

Besides, until the death took place, in spite of His efforts to familiarise the disciples with the prospect, they simply could not credit it.[2] Indeed, there is something tragic in the estrangement which grew up between Him and them, because of His insistence on it.[3] And we have an echo of the hopelessness, to which it reduced them, in Thomas's loyal, though despairing, cry, "Let us go, that we may die with Him" (John xi. 16). It was next to impossible, therefore, for Him to let them see its significance. What He did say, notes of their own tell us, they often at the time did not understand, only understood afterwards in the light of the accomplished fact (Mark ix. 32; Luke ix. 45, xviii. 34; John x. 6, xii. 16). Jesus, therefore, was compelled to speak in hints and allusions, so striking as sometimes to be remembered by their very unintelligibility, and to leave time and event and experience to bring the explanation. Not only so, but Christ spoke in prospect, spoke of what He was going to do for the Father and for them. They speak in retrospect of what was done, and out of experience of what had been accomplished by it for their spiritual lives. It was then the true proportion of things took shape for them, and their theme, as stated by one of them, became not simply Christ, but "Christ, and Him crucified."

To determine Christ's own thought, these facts must be taken into account: (*a*) Jesus foresaw and foretold His own death. At first, there were mere allusions, such as lurked in the question, "Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? But

[1] Sermon on *Holy Father*.

[2] Their incredulity bears out the now prevalent opinion that contemporary Jewish Messianic thought did not anticipate a suffering Messiah. Stanton, *op. cit.* p. 122.

[3] Fairbairn, *Expositor*, Fifth Series, iv. 14 ff.

the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast" (Matt. ix. 15; Mark ii. 19 f.; Luke v. 34 f.). It lay in the well-attested phrase, explained by John as a reference to His death, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John ii. 19).[1] There is another allusion in the reference to Jonah, and the parallel, "So shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. xii. 40). The sign of Jonah meant still more, but it meant that. There is still another in the words to Nicodemus (John iii. 13, 14), for when they were in effect repeated at viii. 28, the "lifting up" is said to be work to be done by His antagonists, and at xii. 32, 33, John explicitly explains it as referring to His death. These are mere hints, but definite enough to show that Jesus had the thought of His death, and that not merely as the ordinary end of human life, clearly before His mind from the beginning of His ministry. It was no afterthought, called up by the hostility which He found Himself provoking.

After Peter's confession explicit statements come. And they are made with detail and completeness, like matters of old standing in the thought of Christ, and only kept in abeyance hitherto till men's minds were fit to receive them. Time after time with increasing particularity He states the fact, the certainty, the necessity, the agents, the place, the time of it, down to a final "after two days is the Feast of the Passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified" (Matt. xxvi. 2). It is the subject He discusses at the Transfiguration, when He made the great renunciation and went back, the acknowledged heir of glory, to meet death

[1] It is quite gratuitous to ask us to accept the construction put upon that by His enemies as a more correct explanation than that perceived by John. For my part, I prefer throughout the explanations appended at times to ambiguous utterances of Christ in the Gospels by contemporary, friendly commentators, to those offered by foes then, or by superior persons in our day who set Matthew and John aside and, in effect, tell us that they themselves have a better understanding of the mind of Jesus than had those who heard Him speak.

for others (Luke ix. 31).[1] His fate was foreshadowed in that of His forerunners. It would fall out where every prophet met his fate, in hardened Jerusalem (Luke xiii. 33). His anointing at Bethany was to Him an anointing for His burial (Matt. xxvi. 12; Mark xiv. 8; John xii. 7). Judas would betray Him. The passover was the last meal He would eat with His disciples before He suffered. It is all foretold, and that deliberately: "Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am He" (John xiii. 19).

But (*b*) another significant set of facts are those which show the mingled eagerness and dread with which Jesus approached and endured the crisis. From the commencement of the last year of His ministry, when Jesus made it clear that men must decide for Him or against Him on His terms, and as a consequence widespread defection set in, a certain nervous anxiety appears in Christ's demeanour. He asks His disciples, "Will ye also go away?" and even Peter's loyal reply does not allay the unrest, for Jesus follows it with the dreary word, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (John vi. 66–71). He felt the treason already in the air. When He met the throng at the foot of the Transfiguration Mount, there is a note of patience sorely tried in the exclamation, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you?" (Mark ix. 19). The impression became more marked from the day whose significance Luke detected and noted so vividly, "When the days were well nigh come that He should be received up, He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem" (Luke ix. 51). What that meant for Him is very plain. There awaited Him that fateful crisis He so wished was past: "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I if it be already kindled?

[1] For a very fine study of the meaning of the Transfiguration, see F. Warburton Lewis, M.A., *Jesus the Son of God*, pp. 30–37.

But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?" (Luke xii. 49). No Herod could forestall it, or rob Jerusalem of its unholy privilege, its bad pre-eminence: "I must go on My way . . . for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem" (Luke xiii. 33). No wonder that the steady look became a fixed look—absorbed, preoccupied, strained. It terrified His disciples. And His rapid steps drawing Him on alone, ahead of His disciples, told of one hurrying towards a crisis. "They were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed; and they that followed were afraid" (Mark x. 32). When the Greeks came seeking to see Him, He feels the crisis is near, and in rapid lines He draws His scheme of death and life for Himself and all who hold with Him, and then exclaims: "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified . . . now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name" (John xii. 20–33). The same state of feeling led Him to desire so earnestly to eat the passover once more with His disciples before He suffered (Luke xxii. 15). But over the comfort of its fellowship hung the pall of the traitor's presence. And for the others! "The hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, for the Father is with Me" (John xvi. 32). Hitherto the thought of that presence had fully sustained Christ. But on the way to Gethsemane the horror of loneliness and desertion grew so terrible that He was sore amazed. The words were wrung from Him: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Mark xiv. 34). He clung to the company and sympathy of fellow-men, only to let them go again, and turn to wrestle in prayer with His Father; and soon He is able to say to Peter: "The cup which My

Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" (John xviii. 11). And through all the indignity and cruelty of the trial He gave no sign of flinching. At last the Cross is reached. The full force of the storm broke upon Him, and out of it came the awful cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" as if that were an ingredient in the cup beyond His darkest forebodings (Matt. xxvii. 46). In all this it is impossible to ignore Christ's sense of that element in death which gives it its terrors to men, and which Paul expresses when he says: "The sting of death is sin." Sinless as He was, Christ could not meet sin's penalty without a nameless and strange dismay. But that passes, and the last words are the explanation of the eagerness to suffer, which ever rose superior to the dread: "It is finished" (John xix. 30); "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit" (Luke xxiii. 46).

A third fundamental fact in reference to the death of Jesus is that He connected it most closely with His resurrection. When He came to announce it explicitly to the Twelve, it was with the immediate consequent, "and the third day rise again" (Matt. xvi. 21 and often). This prediction of Christ's was so well known that, little as it helped the disciples in the hour of trial, it had reached the ears of His enemies, and seemed to them to contain germs of a possible danger which they, as cautious men, must forestall (Matt. xxvii. 62 ff.) No view of His death, therefore, can correspond to Christ's thought of it that does not take definite account of this constant factor in it. It is a death to be illumined by a glorious resurrection.

Once more, to Jesus His death was a fatal necessity; but, at the same time, it was no less a deliberate murder, and also a great act of self-surrender. "The Son of man goeth as it is written of Him, but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed" (Matt. xxvi. 24; Mark xiv. 21; Luke xxii. 22). How vividly the crime of it looms out in

the fate decreed on the wicked husbandmen who slew their lord's son! (Matt. xxi. 40 f.). And this becomes the more impressive when we notice that this parable stands between that of the Two Sons, the picture of the kingdom slipping from the grasp of hypocritical hands, and that of the Marriage Feast of the king's son and the fate of earlier contemptuous guests who slew the inviting servants. The comment on the husbandmen gives the clue to the whole: "Did ye never read this scripture"—a favourite text ever after with Christ's heralds—"'The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner'? Whosoever shall fall on it shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Foreseeing the possibility of such a fate for them, what pathos in His prayer: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34). They knew not that, by slaying Him, they served themselves heirs to the accumulated guilt of their nation's apostasy, reached the climax of the world's sin. But Jesus is not less explicit in asserting His control over the disposal of His life to the very last. With quiet mastery He eludes all plots to seize Him till His hour is come, *i.e.* till He has effected all He wished to do, and His enemies might work their wicked will without prejudice to His cause (Luke xiii. 31 ff.; John vii. 30, xi. 54; Luke xxii. 10). If He is the Good Shepherd laying down His life for His sheep, still it was not per force: "No man taketh My life from Me; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John x. 18). If Judas will betray Him, it will not prevent His eating the Supper with His disciples as He desired. When captors seize, Peter need not draw sword. Had Jesus willed it, twelve legions of angels would have rallied to His call (Matt. xxvi. 53). Pilate is plainly told, "thou wouldst have no power against Me, except it were given thee from above" (John xix. 11). He will accept no drugging draught to dull His pains (Mark

xv. 23).[1] With full consciousness He lays down His life. If His death was a murder, it was still more a great surrender.

These things show us how Jesus forecast His death. What did He mean by submitting to this tragic fate, deliberately weaving it into the scheme of His life? The view of life and suffering in which He had been brought up, and which He had grasped in a quite original way, helps us to understand it.

(*a*) It is impossible to believe that anyone with the insight of Jesus—to put it on the lowest level—could have read the Old Testament with the Book of Job there and Isa. lii. 13–liii. and kindred passages, or witnessed the sacrificial rites of the Temple, without discerning the inner meaning of the sufferings of the innocent, or discovering the extraordinary achievements possible through sufferings. These show that sufferings often afford a test of integrity, and are an opportunity for a triumph of faith. Owing, not only to the power of sympathy, but to the very constitution of humanity, they may be vicarious, and acquire a sacrificial value. Borne at hostile hands, without a murmur, they may be a plea for, and an expression of, the farthest reaching forgiveness, and prove the very crown of service to friend or foe. True of all sufferings, this is pre-eminently true of death, their severest form.

(*b*) Christ's own utterances leave it no surmise that thus and thus He thought. For instance, there was, He said, no bodily sacrifice that was not well worth making in order to escape insidious temptation or becoming a stumbling-block to others (Matt. v. 29 f., xviii. 1–14). No privation, however complete, should stand between a man and perfection (Matt. xix. 16 ff.). Humiliating and hard

[1] Jesus was offered the cup twice. It was the earlier offer He refused. Three hours afterwards, when, on His cry, "I thirst," the second was offered, He accepted it to strengthen Him for the Victor's shout, with which He died, "It is finished; Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit" (Mark xv. 23, cf. ver. 36).

as it may be, burden-bearing is a small price to pay for deliverance from the unrest of earth's unsatisfying quest (Matt. xi. 28–30). Besides, suffering is inevitable, if a consistent stand is made against wickedness, and "blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake" (Matt. v. 8 ff.). Less than such cross-bearing is unworthy of Christ (Matt. x. 38). Even after He explained the terribly literal place the Cross would have in His own life, He required of His disciples that they should take up their cross and follow Him (Matt. xvi. 23 ff.; Mark viii. 34; Luke xiv. 27). For as Joseph Parker magnificently puts it, summing up Christ's philosophy of life in a sentence, "Whatever is not Sacrificial is Satanic."[1] Suffering, suffering for others, was the divine secret, God's plan, for the world's cure, and Christ revealed it (Matt. xvi. 23 ff.). The way of the Cross is the way of salvation.[2] And men must learn that, if they are to serve Him and His cause. Tolstoy is not wrong when he pitches on "resist not evil" (Matt. v. 38–42), as of the very essence of Christ's Christianity.[3] It is the passive side of what follows in the succeeding paragraph, "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you" (Matt. v. 43–48). It is the practical form of forgiveness, and none knew better than Jesus Christ the power of forgiveness to awaken love (Luke vii. 47; Matt. xviii. 21 f.). Suffering, therefore, patient suffering, at the hands of others and for their sake, ay, even unto death, was seen in all its possible potency by Jesus Christ.

(*c*) In view of all this, is it surprising to find death, the climax of suffering, given quite a new function in the scheme of life by such an original genius as Jesus? Life to Christ was no mere matter of food and clothes and shelter (Matt. vi. 25 ff.), a span bounded by death. Life

[1] *Inner Life of Christ*, iii. 9.
[2] Amiel's *Journal*, p. 167.
[3] *Christ's Christianity*, p. 106 ff.

was eternal, death but an episode, though it had become for sinful men the punishment of their sin (Luke xiii. 1–6). But even for them Christ saw in it far other possibilities. There could be a losing of life which was in reality a finding (Matt. x. 39, xvi. 25; Mark viii. 35; Luke ix. 24, xvii. 33; cf. John xii. 25). Of that the crowning example is His own experience. Death was for Him the supreme opportunity of serving the ends of life. He looked before it, and He looked after, and He grasped its chance. And it was this quite original way of taking death into the very scheme of life, and utilising to the full this climax of suffering, to attain the purpose of His life on earth, that made His predictions of His death so utterly unintelligible to His disciples at first, and ultimately led them to discover such fascinating grandeur in it.[1]

That we are not wrong in reading thus Christ's view of His sufferings, is shown by three of His sayings, which tell us, too, what effects He sought to secure by them. There is, first of all, the common form in which He announced His death (Matt. xvi. 21, etc.). In it the reiteration of "the elders, chief priests, and scribes," set over against "the Son of man," as the agents of His death, tells us that Jesus regarded His death as having more than a personal significance. It was a national crime, and yet also a national sacrifice with Himself the Victim, set apart by the civil, sacerdotal, and religious representatives of Israel, *i.e.* by the body corporate of Israel.[2] This corresponds to John's conception of the deeper significance of the advice of Caiaphas (John xi. 49). And when we add Christ's equally significant inclusion of "the Gentiles," in the infliction of His death, not only Israel acts, but all mankind (Matt. xx. 17–19). His death

[1] I owe the thought of this paragraph to a remarkable sermon, delivered by the Rev. George Davidson, M.A., late of Hawick, now of Adelaide, South Australia.

[2] Fairbairn, *Expositor*, Fifth Series, iv. 288.

is the deed of the concentrated wickedness of humanity, and it is endured by their signal Representative.

The second saying is in the sequel to the reply to the request of James and John: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark x. 45; Matt. xx. 28). The request of the sons of Zebedee followed immediately on a renewal of the announcement of His death by Jesus not a week before it took place, and on the very eve of His arrival in Jerusalem. Ambitious and unseemly, it yet was opportune. Christ had just restated the cruel facts of His death; this request leads Him further to explain its use. The brothers thought only of the kingdom to which they perceived it was in some way the portal. But just as on the first announcement Christ had to teach Peter that for every man the way of the cross was the one way of life (Matt. xvi. 21 ff.), so now He has to repeat that lesson to the two, and carry it further to the ten. Before, He had wound up with the question, "What will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (*ἀντάλλαγμα* = the price for which something is bartered). Here He supplies the answer: "The Son of man is come to give His life a ransom for many." What occasions the statement is the ambitious, jealous feeling abroad among disciples, who will think of His kingdom as like earthly kingdoms, with earthly sentiments and methods prevalent in it. There rulers lord it over the subjects, practically make them slaves. Christ's order of rank and power is the very reverse. The greatest is "the prime minister," he that does most service. And the Son of man Himself in founding the kingdom achieves that work along the line of this fundamental principle of its constitution, for "He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," not to make men slaves, but to set them free. But here is a point from which He can let the disciples see something of the meaning, and so of the need,

of His death. The death is the ransom price He pays to achieve man's liberation. What another man could not do for his own soul, even if he had the whole world at his disposal, Jesus does for many, "instead of them" (*ἀντὶ πολλῶν*), by giving His life as ransom. In what sense? To the mind of Jesus, men were the slaves, not so much of suffering and death,—these were mere effects,—they were slaves of sin. He knew that returning prodigal and penitent publican alike found the burden on the conscience, the sense of guilt, the severest element in sin. "Father, I have sinned against heaven . . . I am no more worthy to be called thy son." "God be merciful—be propitious —towards me, the sinner" (Luke xv. 18, xviii. 13). And it is from sin in its entirety He sets them free. In view of this, it is improper to ignore the sacrificial reference in *λύτρον*. Not only in the Septuagint, but also in contemporary Greek, *λύτρον* was used in a sacrificial sense. It is an atonement. It describes an expiatory offering, by which one sets himself free from guilt, by discharging the duty imposed by the god.[1] And in view of the very general recognition among the apostolic teachers of a sacrificial element in the death of Christ, it is arbitrary to deny its presence in Christ's own mind, when He used this word. His mission was to achieve in reality effects which men hitherto associated with sacrificial rites. True, He does not identify His death with any particular sacrifice. But by the use of this word with its familiar sacrificial reference He puts it into relation with the system in its general aspect, and in so far as that did illustrate the meaning of His death. What that popular conception was is very strikingly stated by Schmiedel. He says: "The idea of substitutionary expiation, though quite strange to their real signification, lay so close to the Old Testament sacrifices, and especially to the sin-offering, that it almost

[1] Ramsay, *Expository Times*, x. 109, 158.

inevitably made its appearance in the popular mind."[1] Is it not almost incredible, I ask by the way, that something so naturally suggested could have been essentially foreign to the true meaning of a selected symbol?[2] But what chiefly concerns us, dealing with Jesus who spoke to common people on the level of their own popular thoughts, and in their familiar speech, is that sacrifice suggested substitution and expiation to them. And when Jesus said λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν, He knew they would interpret it in that way, and we cannot believe it was not in His mind, or that He deliberately allowed His disciples on this important matter, and at a time when He was ostensibly explaining the subject to them, to misunderstand Him.

The third great statement is what Christ said at the institution of the Supper, and particularly in giving the cup. The view seems correct which sees in the bread a predominant reference to the Incarnation. The cup concentrates attention on the Death. And without staying to debate at length the precise terms used of the cup, we may take it as well established that, at least, He connected it with His blood, shed as the ratification of a covenant between God and man.

[1] *Hand-Commentar*, ii. 1, 209.

[2] It is nothing to the purpose as determinative of the sacrificial element in Christ's death to appeal to Robertson Smith's studies in the *Religion of the Semites*, and to his discovery that sacrifices originally implied communion between the god and his worshippers, while expiation is a later and subordinate, though increasingly important, element. Christ's death was not framed on the model of these, either Pagan or Jewish. But His death really achieved results for men, which are properly enough suggested by, and described in, terms of ancient sacrifices in so far as these were intended to be expiatory and propitiatory. Christ's death and its stated effects are determinative of the sense in which it is sacrificial, not the remote and often forgotten elements in sacrifice, which only patient archæological research has recovered. What Ritschl says (*Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, ii. 228) of the apostles holds good here. They commence with the fact of Christ's death and resurrection. Being His, they are of infinite significance for men. What that significance is, no one line of illustration fully states. The old sacrificial law suggests something of it; the corn of wheat in the ground suggests something of it, and so on. And that is how we ought to reach doctrines, and not *vice versâ*.

Now this idea of covenant at once recalls the atmosphere of the Old Testament. But is it sufficient in order to understand the meaning of Jesus here to go back to Ex. xxiv., and restrict any sacrificial reference in the ordinance to the burnt-offering and thank-offering, the sacrifices mentioned there? The motive for urging this is not far to seek. It is to confirm a contention that Jesus never hints that there is any need of an expiation in order to the forgiveness of sin by God. All that is necessary is penitence on man's part.[1] Now, unquestionably, that is the predominating note in Christ's teaching. But could it be otherwise prior to His own death? And, supposing it is true that nothing but penitence is required on the part of the sinner, does that exclude the possible necessity of other adjustments wrought by Him who forgives? Jesus did represent God as really forgiving, and Himself claimed and exercised the right to forgive sins on earth; but it was because He was Son of man, and *for Himself* that suggested the humiliation and sufferings inseparably connected with His mission, and if so, a consciousness of their necessity in order to the forgiveness He felt free to bestow. Besides, we have seen already that there is a general reference to sacrifice, which includes propitiation by expiation, in λύτρον. There is, therefore, no *primâ facie* objection to finding more in the reference, in giving the cup, to His blood, than is implied by its connection with Ex. xxiv. And even in that connection, to deny reference to the remission of sins is to ignore the light of the Epistle to the Hebrews on the Jewish understanding of the blood then shed, and, therefore, indirectly on the meaning of Christ's words (Heb. ix. 22; cf. Lev. xvii. 11).

[1] Wendt, *Teaching of Jesus*, ii. 239; *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, iv. 16 f.; H. J. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 296 ff. In reply, see Hilgenfeld, *Zeitschrift für Wissenschaftliche Theologie*, xxxvii. 529 ff.

Weight must also be given to the selection by Christ of Passover time for His death. He brought things deliberately to issue then, just as surely as He avoided the crisis at other feasts and times. It was then He made that public entry into Jerusalem, again cleared the temple, and so challenged attention, that He forced the hands of His enemies. Still more, even while doing this He took special pains to gratify His intense wish to observe the Paschal Supper, undisturbed by His foes, for a last time with His disciples. It was with this He associated His new rite and memorial. It is surely perversity, therefore, to ask us to believe that Passover conveyed no suggestion as to the meaning of His death. The Paschal Supper was associated with the birth into freedom of old Israel. The lamb slain for that feast was a sacrifice which stood in the same relation to that nation's existence, as Christ said (λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν) His death stood to the origin of the kingdom of God (Matt. xx. 28; see p. 272 f.). It was connected with the last blow that struck the fetters from Israel's limbs, and it also was sealed in covenant blood. Is not the conclusion obvious that just as the sprinkled blood of the Paschal Lamb was the safeguard of each Israelitish house, and its death took the place of the death of Israel's firstborn, so the death of Jesus was instead of His people? He endured the fate impending over men, which they had incurred by their sin. And Jesus having borne it for them, their sins can be remitted, and they can enter into the new covenant relationship with God. Christ's determination to associate His death with the Paschal feast warrants us in attributing these thoughts to Him. And so we are not surprised at the phrase in full in Matthew, "This is My blood of the covenant, which is shed for many for, εἰς = with a view to, the remission of sins" (Matt. xxvi. 28). It expresses the very thought to which we have been led by Christ's conduct, and draws aside the veil to let us

catch a glimpse of what forgiveness costs God, though it cost us nothing but genuine penitence and faith. It is on the basis of this that men are forgiven and enter into the new covenant, described by Jeremiah in the passage which, even more directly than Ex. xxiv., suggested the phrase, and in which itself the covenant rests on a foregoing forgiveness (Jer. xxxi. 31–34). It results in a reconstituted humanity, once more set on its right footing with God, animated by the right spirit, and living and acting as His people.

There are several additional phrases in John's Gospel, in which Jesus alludes to His death and its effect. The allusions are chiefly figurative, but they convey a very definite impression. Here Jesus states quite explicitly again and again that He gives His life for the good of men. And, having regard to His unmistakable anticipation of His death, it is doing less than justice to the language to treat this as if it meant no more than that He devoted Himself to their service. He is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep (John x. 15). He is the Friend who gives the crowning exhibition of friendship by laying down His life for His friends (John xv. 13). Thus in His death He acts for others, and does it from deep-seated love. But, as we have noted already, it is to be a lifting up from the earth, which will indeed effect glorious results and shed a flood of light on its own significance (viii. 28, xii. 32, 33), but which is carried out by His enemies in no friendly spirit, and is illustrated by an ignominious parallel, the brazen serpent (iii. 14, 15). For what does the type of the brazen serpent imply? Salvation through Him? Yes. But the impaled brazen serpent represented the defeated foe, and the crucified Son of man exhibits the sin of man, man's subtlest foe, in man's perfect representative, condemned, treated as it deserved to be, and so robbed of its power (cf. Rom. vi. 6; Col. ii. 14, 15).

But the tragic side of the death was never uppermost in John's memory of Christ. If its approach did trouble Christ's soul, it was for a moment, and only to give place to the thought of the glory (John xii. 27, 28). Jesus saw the magnificent possibilities of death. It is like the case of a corn of wheat, that can only bear fruit if it die (xii. 24). Jesus saw that, if He died for men, He could reproduce Himself in them. He could thus gain such a power over them, that they, with heart and mind and will, would respond to His view of sin and holiness, the claims of self and the claims of God and their fellow-men. Let Him die for them, and He could infuse life into them, and that marvellous service would remain forever the food of their souls (vi. 35 ff.). It would prove the mightiest appeal He could use as Risen Lord to keep His Spirit alive in them. And so if He laid down His life, it was that He might take it again, no longer simply His, but a life-generating and sustaining force, quickening the souls of men. In this aspect of it His death was, at once, an act of His own, a response to a command of His Father, and something in which His Father found pleasure (x. 17, 18). Are we wrong in finding here light on the value of the death as a propitiation? It pleased God, among other things, because of its enormous capacity as a moral force in the life of man. This glorious side of the death especially fascinated John—

> ". . . This is not to die,
> If, by the very death which mocks me now,
> The life that's left behind and past my power,
> Is formidably doubled."[1]

It was death, as Paul says, "swallowed up in victory."

Wendt would have us believe that, according to John's Gospel, Christ attributed His redemptive influence entirely to the educative power of His words. And he appeals to

[1] Browning's *Balaustion.*

such texts as, "The flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life (cf. v. 24, vi. 63, viii. 51, xii. 49 f.).[1] But, if attention is paid to the use of ῥήματα, words, in this connection, it is seen that Wendt does not do justice to the words of Christ. ῥήματα refers not to the teachings *per se*, but to the substance of the things taught.[2] Christ's sayings are the record of His doings. And it is the doings at the back of the sayings that give the sayings quickening power. Christ is mighty as a Teacher, because His words breathe the realities which His life, death, and resurrection embody. His words express His acts, which first secured results for men, and so produced effects in them; and these acts on behalf of men reach their climax in death for them. Still more, words expressing such vital facts "are spirit, and they are life," because they are the instruments through which the life-giving Spirit touches the lives of men, and brings the facts into operation upon their minds and hearts and wills. Since this is so, one of the divergences which Wendt finds between Jesus and Paul vanishes into thin air. Jesus is as much more than a mere teacher to Himself, as He is to Paul.

Thus, from John and the Synoptics, we gain a single homogeneous conception of Christ's own view of His sufferings and their primary effect. Its outstanding points are these. His death, the climax of His sufferings, was foreseen by Him from the first. It was at once a crime into which humanity concentrated its antagonism to God, and the crown of His work for the race which He represented. Though endured in line with principles of common appli-

[1] *Teaching of Jesus*, ii. 201 ff.; *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, iv. 59, note, where v. 24, viii. 51, xii. 49, etc., are also quoted. In several of these λόγος is used not ῥήματα; but that does not affect the argument from the usage of ῥήματα, for, as viii. 47, cf. 51, shows, ῥήματα states the substance of λόγος.

[2] See Cremer's *Lexicon*, *sub voce*; and Westcott, *Commentary on John* iii. 34, vi. 63, viii. 47, xvii. 8.

cation, it secured unique results such as He attributes to the death of no other being, and which were due to His unique Personality. Its power lies in the fact that it is the surrender of *His* life in death. It was the sacrifice which embodied the price of men's redemption, and was the exhibition of what their forgiveness cost God. It provided the basis of a new compact, ratified in it between God and man, was thus the fundamental article in the constitution of the new Kingdom, and supplied the Risen Lord with the mightiest force for securing men's adherence to the New Covenant.

We pass to consider the way in which this lesson was apprehended by the followers of Jesus. All our information, so far, has been derived from the Gospels, and there is little more to learn on the matter from them. Yet, it would be to ignore a very significant feature of them all, if mention were not made of the large proportion of those comparatively brief records that is taken up with the story of the Passion of Christ. The events here are followed with a minuteness of detail which conveys the impression that every incident is noteworthy. If this means anything, it is that for them everything in the life of Jesus led up to and found its culmination in His death. The Cross is for them the point of view from which to survey the field and understand it. But, with Jesus, they make it plain that the Cross itself is only to be understood in the light of the Crucified and of His resurrection. To the proof of the latter event they devote only less attention than to the narrative of the death itself. And so the testimony of the evangelists is, that in the earthly career of Him who, by His peerless character, unequalled gifts, and undoubted resurrection, was proved to be the Son of God and as such the Messiah, the event of crowning importance was His Cross, His death.

In the Acts of the Apostles we learn the immediate effect of the Resurrection on men to whom the death had

been first an enigma and then a shattering blow. At once the Cross lost its paralysing power. Under the guidance of the Risen Christ, it was seen that it was in line with the divine forecast of the Messiah's work, and yet even more appeared the monstrous crime of it. They grasped, too, the power of it as a scourge with which to lash the consciences of their contemporaries. And they wielded it with unsparing hand. Nor is it difficult to understand that such an appeal to men of the race that had so impiously rejected their heaven-sent Messiah should have evoked a deep revulsion of feeling, a surrender in shame and remorse to Jesus of Nazareth, but with a humble hope for forgiveness and remission of sins for His sake, and yet that all the while neither preacher nor hearer should have formulated any distinct theory as to the part the death played in securing it for them. So long as the apostles were dealing with Jews, they do not seem to have realised more about the nature of the death than this. Perhaps this is not doing full justice to what they learnt under Christ's instruction (Luke xxiv. 25–27, 44 ff.) from what the prophets had said as to the Messiah's sufferings. They may already have had more than an inkling of what Christ understood. But it is true of all that is explicitly stated. It is a little more difficult to understand how this crime of the Jews could be made to rouse the consciences of mankind in general. The speeches of Paul, however, throw light on it. In them the Resurrection appears as evidence for the position of Jesus as the God-appointed world Judge (Acts xvii. 31). Thus consternation was aroused at the way in which such a one had been treated by men; but they are urged, in the hope that they may be forgivingly received and pardoned, to turn in faith and penitence to Him. The attitude of the Acts, save in a single clause (xx. 28), does not show how the death of Christ was intended to secure the forgiveness of sins in any other way than by this appeal to conscience and

awakening of penitence. This drops far behind Christ's own teaching, but it can claim to have its roots there.

There is no light shed on this subject in the Epistle of James, and we pass to the writings of Paul. And here we are at once struck with the way in which Paul's statement of the meaning of the Cross grows and expands. Out of his own experience of blessings obtained through the Cross, Paul reaches his conception of the meaning of the death. Enjoying these from the hand of his Crucified and Risen Lord, he turns to gaze anew at the Cross, and finds it illumined by their light. But what also contributed largely was his work as Apostle of the Gentiles. That necessitated the full consideration of the necessity of the death. As was said, the presentation of the Crucified Jesus, as raised by God from the dead, and by Him appointed world Judge, could arouse consternation, and lead to adhesion to Him for salvation. But when the first alarm wore off, questioning arose. Why should the Judge first have died, and He the innocent Son of God? Surely to arouse consciences other means, less terrible and less tragic, might have availed. What was the need of the death? For answer, Paul had not direct guidance from Christ. But there were general points of agreement between the apostle and his Master, which pointed towards the answer. (*a*) For them both the Cross, though men come to glory in it, was in itself a thing of shame. As with the speakers at the beginning of Acts, the Cross was the crux, the offence of Christ, which needed to be explained and understood in order to be hailed with rapture. (*b*) They held exactly the same view of life. Its ideal use is sacrificial. Rom. xii. 1, 2, Phil. ii. 17, 18, and many parallel passages, show how natural it was for Paul to find in sacrificial usages the fitting form under which to describe life as it should be spent for God. (*c*) It was, with Paul as with Jesus, the Resurrection that made the death of Christ significant, and it could not be under-

stood divorced from that, "If Christ be not risen, all is in vain" (1 Cor. xv. 12–19). (*d*) Besides, without explaining the reason of it, Christ had insisted upon the fact of its necessity. He had used words that gave broad hints as to its meaning. And Paul, combining with this what he knew by experience of man's spiritual need and what he had found for himself, in harmony with Christ's hints, in the Cross, was prepared to meet inquirers and say why it was that the Christ must die.[1]

The answer is to be found in the Epistles to the Galatians, 2 Corinthians, and Romans. In the Epistle to the Galatians the subject is still encumbered, from the circumstances of the case, with Jewish elements, and it is on one point its evidence is of chief value. The Epistle is addressed to the first purely Gentile Christian community, a community which had embraced the first news of the gospel with avidity, but which was in danger of being diverted into legalism under the idea that Christ's work was incomplete without the supplement of conformity to the Jewish law. To meet this, Paul takes them back to the original teaching, and restates with a new emphasis points whose importance they had apparently forgotten or failed to grasp. He reminds them that the believer in Christ, by his faith, has entered into a union or fellowship with Christ of the most intimate kind, and it is as the result of this union that he enjoys all blessings in Christ. He repeats what is the primary blessing of all, and for it he employs a name virtually peculiar to himself. He is not content to say the man is forgiven. He says he is justified.[2] That word had indeed been used once by Jesus, to describe the position of the forgiven publican (Luke xviii. 14). But Paul uses it constantly. It

[1] Cf. Lidgett, *Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*, p. 262.

[2] "Forgiveness does not feel the word to say,—
As I believe in One who takes away
Our Sin, and gives us righteousness instead."
A. H. Clough, Mari Magno, "The Clergyman's Tale."

occurred in his first sermon in Galatia itself (Acts xiii. 39). And he now recurs to it, preferring it to "forgive," because it is positive, states where the forgiven man is. The man is restored to the position one would occupy, had he fully kept the law. He is in the position of the returned and restored prodigal. He is a son once more. The Galatians had allowed themselves to be told that, while the forgiveness came through union with Christ in His death by faith, the reinstatement as son depended on conformity to the rights and requirements of the Jewish law. If that were so, Paul tells them, as he told Peter in similar circumstances, Christ is dead in vain (Gal. ii. 11–21). To make His death this mere awakener of conscience, is to reduce it to a needless horror. For the man united with Christ it is something very different. By God's commission and out of purest love, Christ had submitted to the conditions of human life, "born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons" (iv. 4, 5); "He loved me, and gave Himself up for me" (ii. 20). And what He gave Himself up to was this. Every man under the law had proved a law-breaker, and was therefore under its curse. But, as His death on the Cross showed, Christ had also come under the curse (iii. 13). That could not be for Himself, for He was personally innocent. He bore that for others therefore, and so redeems them from the curse and repones them in the position of sons. And the net result of this is, that, for one thing, Christ's death is the endurance for others of the penalty of the law. Even if they die, death has lost for them its penal character. Christ's death terminates entirely their connection with the law (ii. 19), and provides for the attainment of all blessings by faith in Christ.

In the relative passage in 2 Cor. v. 11–21, Paul is mainly occupied with presenting in the most solemn and persuasive terms the importance of reconciliation with God.

It is a moot point with theologians whether reconciliation between God and man involves a change wrought in the feelings of God as well as in those of man. A fair consideration of the way in which Paul states it here shows that he thought so. He was a true son of the evangelical prophet: "Thou wast angry with me, but thine anger is turned away" (Isa. xii. 1). The following points make that obvious, and they contribute their quota to an understanding of Paul's thought of the necessity for Christ's death. (*a*) He leads men up to the crisis of acceptance or rejection of God's terms of peace by a reference to the eternal issues which depend upon it, to the dread thought of a Judgment, and to all those monitions of conscience that awaken fear of God in guilty hearts (iv. 7–v. 11). If all that means anything, it means a very deep sense of the terrible consequences of the wrath of God against sin (ii. 16, iv. 3). (*b*) Alongside of this must be set the fact, that Paul speaks of the reconciliation as already in one sense an accomplished fact, to which he calls men to give in their adhesion (cf. Rom. v. 11). He speaks in terms that remind of Christ's words on the Cross, "It is finished," which are simply the triumphant repetition of His verdict, pronounced in anticipation on the previous night upon the course of His earthly career, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (John xix. 30, cf. xvii. 4). Through Christ God has accomplished a result, in view of which He does not impute to men their trespasses, but sends them a message of peace. But it is on the basis of what Christ has achieved, and of what that expresses of the change of God's attitude toward the sinner, that the sinner is invited to change his attitude toward God. (*c*) But what is it that God has done? Paul states it in a single sentence with impressive abruptness,—there should be no connecting particle,—"Him who knew no sin, He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might

become the righteousness of God in Him" (v. 21). That is the substance of the word of reconciliation. In the connection there is no doubt of what was in Paul's mind when he speaks of Christ being made sin. He means His experience in His association with humanity and in death (cf. vv. 14, 15, 20, 21). Death was the curse of sin. It had come upon Him who knew no sin. He endured it therefore not on His own account, but in virtue of His union with sin-cursed humanity, as "the representative of sin's totality," to use Schmiedel's phrase.[1] And the need for dealing with sin thus in a representative was just this, that if it was to receive that exposure, and meet that condign treatment, which God felt to be indispensable, it could not be done otherwise, without involving the annihilation of the race, which God was anxious to save.[2]

That we are not putting a wrong construction upon Paul's words becomes evident, when we turn to the Epistle to the Romans. Here he so far traverses the ground already covered in Galatians, but he does so with less of the polemic spirit. He once more brings the death of Christ into the foreground, and shows its bearing in two directions—upon us and upon God. It is a potent factor in the new life of the justified man in mystical union with Christ. But it is so because, first of all, it puts the man, united with Christ by faith, into his right position with God. How it does so Paul explains in two passages, namely, iii. 19–26 and v. 11–21, and other references in the Epistle can best be understood in connection with these.

To take the second first, v. 11–21, we saw already

[1] "Repräsentant der gesammten Sünde," *Hand-Commentar*, ii. 208.

[2] Orello Cone makes the very pertinent remark, however, that "the relation of Christ and men, though reciprocal, is not, in Paul's thought, that of equals, so that any man might be conceived as taking Christ's place" (*The Gospel and its Earliest Interpretations*, p. 194). Jesus was the only one fit to occupy this representative position.

that this passage proves the legitimacy of salvation by means of the work of a representative. That is done by an appeal to the constitution of humanity, to its solidarity. That had given fatal effect to the sin of Adam, and involved widespread condemnation. It was therefore perfectly legitimate to utilise the same principle in the interest of justification of the many through the obedience of one. This passage, therefore, establishes the principle on which the position ascribed to Jesus in Galatians and 2 Corinthians is founded, and warrants the virtue ascribed to His actions and sufferings in it.

In the very same way it sheds valuable light on the still more important passage in this Epistle itself, namely, iii. 19–26. This explains exactly what is the service Christ renders for men in His death. Paul puts it in one word, ἱλαστήριον. After much discussion, it is becoming more and more generally admitted that this word involves propitiation, and propitiation by expiation.[1] Objections to this thought are largely dictated by the idea that it is somehow derogatory to the honour of God. And certainly in the forms which among the heathen such offerings often took, and the ideas of God to which they were addressed, that is true. Yet, as Professor Lewis Campbell says, while fully admitting the force of Plato's scorn for the believer in gods who can be bribed by prayers and incense to the remission of sins, "the Eleusinian mystic, the Orphic preacher, and even the juggling priest of Sabazius had an inkling of human needs and requirements, which the intellectual scorn of Plato overlooked: disorders which they contented themselves with healing slightly, in their ignorance of a more prevailing remedy."[2] And so we must not

[1] "The offering by which expiation is attained," Ramsay, *Expository Times*, x. 158; cf. Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, p. 91 ff.

[2] *Religion in Greek Literature*, p. 351; cf. Dods, *Gospel of John*, i. 375.

take fright at the ideas there associated with this word, but see what Paul meant, when he says ἱλαστήριον. The conceptions interwoven with this passage show that this is his name for Christ in His death. This death of Christ is the means to the attainment of a result which stands in sharp contrast with the consequences of the wrath of God. It exhibits the righteousness of God. It succeeds where the law had failed, and that in two ways—(*a*) The law had only succeeded in ratifying the condemnation of men; it did not justify their justification (iii. 19–22). (*b*) It also failed to secure or guarantee obedience (viii. 3). Christ, by His incarnation and death, did both. Death to Paul was the wages, the fruit, the inevitable end of sin. Even if περὶ ἁμαρτίας in viii. 3 does not mean "as an offering for sin," there are other phrases in which it is explicitly said that Christ died "for sin," "for sins"; and so in whatever sense we take περί or ὑπέρ in this connection, Paul thought of Christ as receiving sin's wages. But while Christ died for sins, they were the sins of others. He died for us (Rom. v. 6, 7). For Himself He was perfectly innocent. His appearance in flesh condemned sin in the flesh, proved it had no inherent right to be there, while His death under these conditions at once exhausted sin's claim, and expressed in the strongest terms possible God's utter abhorrence and condemnation of it (vi. 6–11, viii. 3). Thus at the cost of His life (iii. 24) Christ set men free, not only from the guilt, but also from the power, the slavery, of sin. On the basis of this God is reconciled to us (v. 9), and reckons us as righteous (chap. iv. *passim*). Why? Because of the obedient spirit which throughout His life and Passion Christ displayed (v. 19). It is not because of the excruciating agony which He endured, but because of the humble acquiescence with which He accepted the fate, which God, on account of

their sins, had decreed against the race with which He had identified Himself. That is the propitiatory element. That is what expiates the sin, and it was because only by the endurance of death all this could be adequately expressed, man's Saviour in saving him must die.

Viewed thus, the death was a great acknowledgment in practical form by a worthy representative of the race, that God made no unreasonable demand on men, when He called them to perfect holiness, and that the fate He decreed against its refusal was no more than it deserved. It afforded a basis on which God could forgive men and reinstate them in His favour without the risk of any possible misconception arising, as to His antagonism to sin, either from that forgiveness or from past forbearance. Here was something provided by God, done by Him through His Son, which satisfies Himself, and is thus a propitiation, even though it is His own work. And when it is seen that all this was provided by God Himself in order that He might deal graciously with the sinner, "be just and yet the justifier," the death of Christ becomes above everything the revelation of God's love. In His death,—God's Son, as truly as He is Son of man,—sin, the wrong inflicted on God by men, is seen to remain, as it were, on God in place of recoiling upon the head of the sinner. And so if Christ once said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13), human gratitude discovers in His death a love greater still: "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 6–8).

In order to do full justice to Paul's thought of the efficacy of Christ's death, however, another element has to be taken into account. For lack of it, the exposition of his thought just given, which is in harmony with the old Augustinian and Reformed view, has always

incurred the reproach of being juridical, forensic. Now, I am not inclined to take fright at nicknames. But if there is anything in the reproach, it does not apply to Paul's own view, when we remember the intense reality which the union of Christ and the believer possessed for him, and the complete reciprocity which it implied. If Christ was united with him, he was ἐν Χριστῷ. If in Christ's case there was an Incarnation, in the believer's there was, to coin a clumsy word for the moment, an In-Christation. How complete, in his mind, was the union, is only seen when we discover that the very name "Christ" can be used by him to describe, not the individual Jesus, but the new humanity in all its numbers who adhered to Him (1 Cor. xii. 12; cf. Gal. iii. 16).[1] In virtue of this, the death of Christ, as well as every other act or experience of His, is also the act and experience of the man united to Him. If Christ dies, he dies; if Christ rises, he rises. And so Paul could say, "I am crucified with Christ" (Gal. ii. 20), and "Our old man was crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin: for He that hath died is justified from sin . . . we are buried with Him" (Rom. vi. 4, 6, 7, cf. vii. 4). It is a union which is inseparable (Rom. viii. 35–39). In virtue of it, by the Cross of Christ, the flesh is crucified with the passions and lusts thereof (Gal. v. 24), "The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. vi. 14); and I am dead to the rudiments of the world (Col. ii. 20). Now, this identification of the sinner with Christ in His death explains the curious introduction of the subjective element at Rom. iii. 25, ἱλαστήριον διὰ πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι. Why διὰ πίστεως? Because all suspicion of legal fiction disappears when, through the appropriation of faith, Christ's death is not simply a death

[1] Godet, *Introduction to the New Testament, Pauline Epistles*, p. 209.

ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, but becomes our death, is made our own, and in it we not only expiate our guilt, but have done with sin. It also explains why, in order to the realisation of God's plan (2 Cor. v. 11–21), it was not sufficient that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, as if all could be effected *ex opere operato*, but man must respond and be reconciled to God.

In the succeeding Epistles (Eph., Phil., Col., 1 and 2 Tim., and Titus) Paul does not add anything to what he has already reached. But the use that he makes of the death adds enormously to the conviction, that he did regard it in the way just described. Throughout, he assumes the points just stated as well established positions on which he can build. He appeals to them, and urges upon men their practical consequences, namely, the subjective effects which the death should produce in the lives of men who have already, by faith, appropriated the great initial objective advantages secured by it, which Paul comprehends under the term, justification. These later Epistles all correspond more or less with what follows chap. v. in Romans. They assume what is stated up to that point. And this is not surprising. We can easily understand it in the case of the Pastoral Epistles, written to men who had spent months in Paul's company, and must often have heard him express the ideas which he writes to Rome as a sketch of the principles of the gospel, as he understood it. But the truth there elaborated would be equally familiar to the readers of the other Epistles, for it was while he was in prolonged personal contact with the Church at Ephesus, had occasion to visit the Philippian Church, and was in direct touch with the men through whom the gospel was carried to Colosse and the valley of the Lycus, that Paul was writing these Roman, Corinthian, and Galatian Epistles. They are the reflection of his preaching at the time at which they were written, preaching heard by the men to

whom he subsequently wrote.[1] What is said, when he writes to them, as to the nature and objective effects of Christ's death corresponds to what they knew he had preached. It is a death for us (Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 20–22). It is the outcome of His love (Tit. iii. 4 f.). It is the provision of God's grace, to secure the great object He had in view for men (Eph. ii. 5). Its spiritual value lies in the spirit of obedience, in which it is endured (Phil. ii. 5 ff.). It effects a redemption, whose first result is the forgiveness of sins, and the ascription of a status of righteousness, which could not otherwise be attained (Phil. iii. 8 ff.). It gives a footing in an inheritance of liberty, which is the grand position and possession of the sons of God, and in which it is possible to work out one's own salvation, and to realise its possibilities under the motive power of the indwelling energy of God (Phil. ii. 12 f.; Eph. iii. 15 ff.).

On reflecting on the whole body of Paul's thought, may it not be fairly said that he has simply elaborated, in the light of the accomplished fact of the predicted death and resurrection, and under the guidance of his own spiritual experience and observation, the hints given by Christ Himself, when He spoke of His mission as a mission of salvation, undertaken at the will of His Father; of His right as Son of man to forgive sins, and as Son of God to make men truly free; of His life given as a ransom for many, and His blood as the blood of a new covenant?[2]

[1] Cf. what Weizsäcker says of Paul's method of argument in Rom. i.–v.: "This scripture proof was not arranged for the first time during the composition of the letter . . . he had composed a kind of doctrinal scheme for didactic purposes" (*Apostolic Age*, i. 132).

[2] Mackintosh (*Natural History of the Christian Religion*, pp. 368–412) draws an elaborate contrast between a doctrine of salvation without atonement, which he ascribes to Christ, and Paul's doctrine of atonement. It contains some remarkable dialectics, such as when he represents Paul as attracted to Christ's teaching by its revelation of a way of salvation without atonement, which he transforms, on accepting it, owing to a residuum of Jewish influence in his nature, into a doctrine of salvation by atonement. He attributes the popularity which, in opposition to most kindred critics, he maintains was enjoyed by the Pauline

The terms λυτρόω, ἀπολύτρωσις, ἀντίλυτρον are an echo of λύτρον, and the connections in which they occur are a commentary on it. The sacrificial idea is pervasive rather than prominent, and in line with the common sense of its need, not in direct reference to particular Jewish rites. This was only to be expected in the case of the Apostle of the Gentiles, but it is in striking agreement with the Master Himself. Paul has penetrated too, and utilised to the full, the closeness of the union with humanity which Christ established by His Incarnation. He speaks, indeed, without any anxiety about technical or conventional terms, or the exactness of his reproduction of words of Christ. He uses with characteristic liberty all material that makes his meaning plain. But he has thoroughly assimilated his Master's thought, and is only anxious to share it with his brethren. And the very freedom of expression which he uses is the best proof of his deep-rooted conviction of his loyalty to the meaning of Christ.

Closely akin to Paul's thought is the conception of the meaning of Christ's death given in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in 1 Peter, and in John. We are not concerned, of course, with the inter-relation of the various views. We are only dealing with their relation to the teaching of their common Master, and variety of view, which remains harmonious, is only testimony to the richness of the original conception. And the views are harmonious. Peter, for instance, again presents that sacrificial view of life which we saw in Christ, and found in Paul (1 Pet. ii. 5). He knows something of that vital connection with humanity,

doctrine, to the fact that it corresponds with ordinary, unphilosophic, anthropomorphic views of God, and admits that "it may have been the only form in which the truth could have been made level to the apprehension whether of Jews or Gentiles in that age" (p. 387). And the net result is that "Jesus was a pure idealist whom the age could not comprehend; while, on the other hand, Paul as a teacher remained in touch with his age." It requires more than a re-reading of the original documents to accept this as a true account of the relations of Christ and Paul.

taught by Jesus, which becomes of priceless significance to men through faith, though it does not mean so much to his simpler nature, as it did to Paul who, with his eager, mystical nature, absorbed and lived in it. Years of experience, too, forced Peter beyond the position of his speeches in the Acts, and in his Epistle he sees more of the objective need of the death of Christ for redemption. The terrible irony of the Cross he sees now (though once he could not) as the Saviour foresaw it (1 Pet. ii. 7, 8). He explicitly ascribes redemptive value to the death of Christ. In Jesus, on His trial and on the Cross, He had seen in living characters Isaiah's patient, suffering servant of the Lord (1 Pet. ii. 21–24), as innocent, too, as He was patient (1 Pet. iii. 18). He was the true Lamb of sacrifice. He bore the sins of others. His precious blood ransomed them, and brought them, once alienated, near to God (1 Pet. i. 18, 19, ii. 24, iii. 18). The correspondence between this and the teaching of Paul is obvious, and its roots in Christ's teaching are the same as in Paul's case. It is true that a radical difference is asserted to exist between them, namely, that, while Paul attributes the redemptive power to the propitiatory effect, Peter finds it in its force as a moral example. This, however, is to ignore those things. First, Paul, while he insists on the objective value of the death as an atonement, also speaks of it as an example (Rom. xv. 2, 3; cf. 1 Cor. xi. 1; Eph. iv. 32, v. 1, 2; Phil. ii. 5), and there is therefore no incompatibility. Secondly, while Peter does speak of it as an example in iii. 18 and ii. 21, he does not do so in i. 18, 19. And even where he does, there is not the slightest suggestion, that it is by its use for an example it possesses redemptive worth. Thirdly, in appealing to it as an example, Peter is only following the lead of Christ who, when stating the quite unique redemptive significance and power of His giving of His life, at the same time exhibited it as a crowning example of the

principle on which men ought to utilise their lives.[1] And so in Peter's emphasis on the influence as an example that lies in Christ's death, we have not a divergent conception of its saving efficacy, but an interesting addition to our sense of its range of power.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, as we have seen already, we have a writing devoted to showing that in Christ and His life and death, Christianity has something which conserves all that was good in the Levitical ritual and which transcends even its best, as the reality does the shadow. In the Levitical system, all was earthly, material, typical. In Christ we have the heavenly, a term which, throughout the Epistle, is not to be interpreted locally, but as meaning the real, the true, the essence of what was formerly only symbolised. The writer dwells on two points: (*a*) Christ, the True Priest; (*b*) Christ, the Perfect Sacrifice. (*a*) He establishes his first contention by an appeal, expressed in terms of Messianic prediction, to the outstanding features of the Person and Life of Christ. As Son of God incarnate, possessed of the power of an indissoluble life, among men He at once, in virtue of His inherent capacity (after the order, not of Aaron, but of Melchisedec), filled a representative position as true mediator between God and man. He was in reality all that a priest was officially. He was in direct touch with God, in abiding fellowship with Him, and so was able to command instant attention for all that appealed to God through Him. But He was also in vital sympathy with man even in his most tragic situations, tempted and tried like as we are, made perfect through suffering, heard in that He feared, and so He is able to feel for infirmities and succour them that are tempted.[2] He

[1] See note above, p. 272.

[2] How vital to truest sympathy is the *experience* of trial, whether succumbed to or triumphed over, is vividly illustrated by what Green (*Short History of the English People*, p. 360) says: "It was with the unerring instinct of a popular movement that among a crowd of far more heroic sufferers, the Protestants fixed,

needed no sacrifice for Himself. His was the flawless life. And so He was fit to offer the sacrifice for the people, and to renew the covenant. This is quite an original way of presenting Christ, and peculiar to this writer. He alone speaks of Christ as Priest. And the idea strikes us as without motive in previous language. But the very name, ὁ Χριστός, might suggest Priest to a Jew as naturally as Prince. Lev. iv. ff. (LXX.) speaks of ὁ ἱερεὺς ὁ Χριστός, *i.e.* the Anointed or Christ Priest. And if the writer was already familiar with sacrificial views of Christ's sufferings, it is not unnatural to see him find in Christ also the anointed Priest. (*b*) But what was the sacrifice? It was Himself. The Author grasped the great truth that, when it comes to reality, Priest and Victim must be one. The supreme sacrifice anyone can offer is himself.[1] To show how complete Christ's sacrifice was, the author, to work out a comparison, selects the ritual of the great Day of Atonement. He does so, because the rites and offerings then were a most instructive epitome of all the Jewish sacrificial ceremonies. They embodied everything suggested by other sacrifices, the nation's sin, its burden, its guilt, its hatefulness to God, its rupture of the relations between God and His people. They tell us of what is needed to remove all that, secure forgiveness, cleanse the conscience, renew the covenant, and keep the life pure. But, after all, these were mere symbols. The blood of bulls and goats

in spite of his recantations, on the martyrdom of Cranmer as the deathblow to Catholicism in England. For one man who felt within him the joy of Rowland Taylor at the prospect of the stake, there were thousands who felt the shuddering dread of Cranmer. The triumphant cry of Latimer could reach only hearts as bold as his own, but the sad pathos of the Primate's humiliation and repentance struck chords of sympathy and pity in all."

[1] In the face of this it is an inconsequence to say, as Ménégoz does (*La Théologie de l'Épître aux Hébreux*, p. 244), that it is not the victim that expiates the faults, it is the offerer. If in the grand reality Priest and Victim are one, and the priest is the representative embodiment of all offerers, we must argue from this, and not from the symbolic rite. Besides, how does the offerer expiate his sin? It is by offering the Victim, which represents himself.

could neither appeal to God, nor touch man's moral and spiritual nature. Nothing can do that, except a holy life, freely surrendered in death. That is what Christ offered.[1] Death means both endurance of sin's penalty, and life set free for larger service. Both elements are there. And it is impossible to eliminate the former in favour of the latter in this Epistle, when account is taken of the strong insistence on the endurance of death, death that terrifies, death that is shameful, as the means by which Christ accomplished His work and attained His glory (cf. ii. 9, 14, ix. 15, xii. 2, xiii. 12, 13). His holy character, His flawless life, the blend of all perfection in the world of the moral and the religious, animated by the eternal Spirit, and in absolute submission to the will of His Father, made Him in fact all that sacrifices and holy attire made the priest, and unblemished form made the victim, in symbol. And by that spirit, in submission to that will, He offered Himself to God, as the great world-atonement, gathering up into Himself all that the priest, fulfilling the different parts of his office, sacrifices of every kind, slaughtered victim, presented and sprinkled blood, each dimly foreshadowed in fragments and patchwork. In Him, all that is reduced to its net essential significance, and Priest and Victim are one. But the author of this Epistle is fully alive to the significance of the Resurrection, although he never mentions the fact. To him the Priest and Victim have not perished in the oblation. The death was also the rending of the veil. The Priest has entered the Holy Place with the propitiatory offering. And He ever liveth with the irresistible plea to urge constantly on behalf of all who adhere to Him. What this effects in men, the writer expresses by the terms *καθαρίζειν*, *ἁγιάζειν*, *τελειοῦν*. Of these, the last is practically equivalent to Paul's *δικαιοῦν*, and refers not to character, but

[1] Bruce (*Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 436) gives a capital analysis of the points included by the author in his conception of the death of Christ.

to standing before God.[1] *Καθαρίζειν* refers to the production of effects in the conscience and character of men, but contemplates these effects as results, reached by the reflex action of the propitiatory sacrifices offered to God. And *ἁγιάζειν* refers to the relation of holy fellowship with God, which those enjoy who avail themselves of the merits of the sacrifice. The right of access to God, and fitness for it, are the results which Priest and Victim secure for those whom they represent. And a call to the diligent use of this privilege is the grand practical application which the writer makes of the truth he has been expounding. How sacrifice, innocent life laid down in death, for the sake of sinners avails with God for sinners, how it does expiate guilt, the writer does not fully explain. He felt no need to do so to men who all their lives had used sin and guilt offerings, and taken part in the rites of the Day of Atonement. Their own hearts explained those things to them. The writer's object is only to convince them that Christ more than takes the place of these and fulfils their part. But there is surely a suggestion in those references to the stainless innocence and humble faith of the Victim, to His bearing the curse of sins, and to the capacity of such a life, so laid down for men, to quicken, convict, and calm the conscience, and impel to holy living. They imply that, not because of the effects produced, but because of its capacity to produce these effects, this Life and Death counted for so much with God.

How does this, then, stand related to Christ's own teaching? In form it is very different. There runs through it all a scholastic strain as different from the artless directness of the Saviour's words as well can be. But it is, all the while, a grand effort to translate the ideas learnt from Christ into that stereotyped framework of the Levitical

[1] As to the form, what in Paul is expressed forensically is in Hebrews expressed in terms of sacrificial and priestly ritual; cf. Edwards, *Hebrews*, p. 171.

economy, which had meant so much to many a devout Jew, and had been the subject of devout reflection to so many a patient student among them. They were old-fashioned folk to whom the author was writing, intensely conservative in their ways of looking at things, yet not past saving, if truth could be brought within their range of vision. There was the danger of bursting wine skins in such an effort. And while the Levitical ritual still prevailed, Christ and His apostles did not make any such attempt. But when the Holy City was threatened and the Temple was tottering, the case was different, and our author bravely undertook the task. There is rare sympathy all through and wonderful tact. And the result is a real gain to the understanding of the life and death of Christ in its connection with the rites, in which men had sought to express their hearts' necessities and cravings before He came and before they knew Him. But this is so because the writer is so loyal to the truths which he had first learnt in their essential form from the teaching, life, and death of Jesus Christ Himself, and his Epistle has not lost its value in later days. In the prayer of Christ, in John xvii., there is a specimen of activity on behalf of men, which embodies the very reality of the best that efficient priestly service can effect. Christ speaks there from the standpoint of His work as completed, and so, as affording a basis of appeal with the Father. And there we have something from His own lips more than sufficient to justify all that the writer to the Hebrews has said. What he has done has been simply to lay hold of the Living, Exalted Christ within the veil, and, in the vivid light of these prayers of the days of His flesh, the tragedy of His death, and the triumph of His resurrection, show men that what He did then He does still. His death remains the permanent plea of the Living Christ on behalf of every soul that comes unto God by Him.

In John's writings the clue to the thought of Christ's

death is found in the Baptist's designation of Christ, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." The music to which Handel, in the "Messiah," has set these words, changing from a weird, wistful wail to a note of calm, thankful joy, exactly reproduces John's view of Christ's sufferings. In John's view the glory always surmounts the gloom, and he dwells chiefly in his Epistles on the effects which the death for men can produce in them. But effects have their causes. Jesus is the Lamb of God, *i.e.* He is the God-appointed sacrifice. It is as such He beareth away the sin of the world. The latter of these two statements is not the explanation of the former. It is the former which justifies the latter. It is by bearing as sacrificial Victim, that He is able to bear away the sin of the world. Can that view be made good? Is it John's?

The following considerations seem to justify it. (1) The term Lamb of God certainly suggests sacrifice. This is not invalidated by saying that the name is suggested by Isa. liii. 6, and that the simile of the Lamb there only illustrates the patience of the uncomplaining Servant of God in the midst of His sufferings. Doubtless it was the patience and submission with which the Sufferer bore the sufferings that gave them their value. But the whole thought of that passage is saturated with the spirit of sacrifice; it is the distillation of the quintessence of all that sacrifices symbolise. The Lamb of God, when once it has taken us to Isa. liii., attaches itself, not to a verse, but to the passage as a whole. But (2) in view of the Apocalypse and of other passages in the Gospel, it is quite arbitrary to say that Lamb here cannot refer to the sacrificial Victim. These show that John was quite familiar with the idea of sacrifice in connection with Christ. In the Revelation the favourite term for Christ is the Lamb.[1] The Lamb referred to is a slaughtered

[1] The difference of the Greek term in the Apocalypse and in the Gospel indicates no divergence of thought.

Lamb. And its remarkable powers are attributed to the fact that it has been slaughtered, *i.e.* slain for sacrifice. We are not compelled to think of any particular sacrifice here. As is usual in the case of Christ, the reference is general, and the Lamb is mentioned because it was the animal in most common use for all sacrificial purposes. (3) But most significant of all is John's record, in his Gospel (xi. 49–52, xviii. 14), of the diabolical advice of Caiaphas.[1] That was a deliverance which, for inherent wickedness, and yet intrinsic truth, struck him as unparalleled. And to have come from Caiaphas! He knew the man, and it was astounding. He never could rest satisfied till he explained it to himself as a sort of unconscious prophecy, made by him in virtue of his high-priestly position, and as, at the same time, the official setting apart by the high priest of the true world's Sacrifice. Dr. Marcus Dods has focused the significance of it, when he calls his chapter on it, "Jesus the Scapegoat."[2] John, therefore, was perfectly familiar with the idea of Jesus as, in His life and death, the world's Representative, who bore the burden and the curse of the world's sin.

When we come to his first Epistle, we see again that he regarded this as the means in Christ's hand of expiating the world's sin.[3] Twice over he tells us that Christ is the propitiation for sin. The word he uses is different from that used by Paul. It is ἱλασμός, a term descriptive of the slaughtered victim as presented to God by the priest on behalf of its offerer, and that as a means of restoring

[1] See Chapter IV. p. 120.

[2] *Gospel of John*, vol. ii. Whether we agree with Ritschl's view of sacrifice or not, his statement is undeniable, that we cannot escape the sacrificial view of Christ's death, it is so prevalent, not only in Paul, but throughout the New Testament. *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, ii. 161.

[3] It is a confirmation of the argument for unity of authorship to find, both in Gospel and Epistle, the same spontaneously expressed expansion of the range of the efficacy of Christ's work from an inner circle to embrace the whole world. Cf. xi. 52 and 1 John ii. 2.

him to a place in God's favour (cf. Lev. iv. (LXX.) *passim*). Christ is that. He is that in virtue of His character (δίκαιος, 1 John ii. 2). He is that by the will of God, and as the result of God's love (1 John iv. 10). But Christ is more. Christ is our Παράκλητος (1 John ii. 2). Advocate fully expresses the idea intended. Only, when advocate is associated with sacrifice, we think of a priestly advocate. And John here is in line with the distinctive note of Hebrews, that ultimately the true Priest and Sacrifice must be one.

In view of all these expressions, which show John's familiarity with the sacrificial view of Christ's sufferings, and therefore his harmony with Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews, it is not necessary to repeat what this involves. We must, however, repeat that John makes most, explicitly, of the effects produced by the blood of Christ upon men. It secures for them, indeed, forgiveness, forgiveness constantly renewed for every renewed need of it, and the deliverance from all sin.[1] And nobody who knows, as John did (1 John iii. 20, 21), the paralysing power which the element of guilt in sin exercises over the life of man, can speak of deliverance from all sin, and fail to include guilt. The very term he uses, καθαρίζειν, means, not simply cleansing, but cleansing by expiating.[2] Still his chief thought, as we are led to expect from those utterances of Christ on the matter which he has treasured in his Gospel, is of the effect the death of Christ produces in the lives of men. He is more occupied with the blood applied to the conscience than with the blood shed. But we have seen that he recognises that the secret of the power of that blood is that it is the blood of the Sacrifice.

We have thus reviewed the teaching of the New Testa-

[1] On this see Alexander's extremely interesting paragraph, *Epistles of John*, p. 63.

[2] See Cremer's *Lexicon*, *sub voce*.

ment writers on this all-important subject. And while there is remarkable harmony, there are unmistakable variations. Each and all are legitimate reproductions or developments of Christ's own teaching, but they present the workings of individual minds upon that teaching in the light of its great practical demonstration in His life, death, and resurrection, and of the effects which experience told them it had produced in themselves. They show us it in these aspects. (1) It was the inevitable issue of His life, but the Resurrection was its equally inevitable sequel and the mirror in which to see it aright. (2) It was a terrible crime, but well fitted to stir the consciences of men. (3) It was the divinely appointed means of expressing God's utter condemnation of sin, of freeing men from sin, of restoring them to their right relation with God, and securing them permanently in the enjoyment of the position. (4) Endured to serve a great redemptive end, it was the crowning instance of self-sacrifice, and so fitted to be an example to men. (5) It was the great reality foreshadowed in the old rites of sacrifice. (6) It was capable of exercising the most potent influences over the lives of men, not simply formally or sentimentally, but morally and spiritually, as a vital principle within. The Gospels represent the first view, the Acts the second, Paul the third, Peter the fourth, the Epistle to the Hebrews the fifth, John the sixth. But even to say this is to risk leaving the impression that these views are held exclusively and antagonistically, while in reality, in every case, it is only predominantly, and with a more or less full suggestion of the other views as well, and that particularly in the case of Paul. And full justice is not done, either to their thought, or to the satisfaction with which God regarded the sacrifice of Calvary, unless all of these are kept in view. This wealth of conception, drawn from the event and from Christ's utterances about it, is not in excess of what these sayings led us to anticipate. And

if it was impossible for Jesus Himself to speak more fully in the days of His flesh, and before the event, than He did, still the pregnancy of His words is decisively shown by the fruit that has sprung from them, when once "this Corn of wheat had fallen into the ground and died."

CHAPTER VIII

The Activities of the Exalted Christ

The Resurrection—The Christian Community as seen in the Acts.

The Ascension and its Significance—As seen in the Acts and in the Apocalypse—The Relation of this to Christ's Predictions—Significance of the Method of His Ascension to His Throne.

Pentecost and the Promise of Christ—Their Expectation and its recognised Fulfilment—The Gift of the Spirit not an isolated Experience—Meaning of Holy Spirit, derived from Old Testament and endorsed by Christ—The Gift of Tongues—The Spirit's Influences in the Church and in the Individual—(1) As Author of Holy Character; so Paul—The Community a Temple, the Individual a Shrine—The Spirit applies the Work of Christ, Rom. vi.–viii.—Was Paul a Perfectionist?—Comparison with John—Evidence of Rom. vii. 7–viii. 2—(2) Guide to the Truth; so John—Was the Holy Spirit a Person to the Apostles?—Divine Energy—Personal Suggestions—Relation to God and Man—Relation to Christ—Christ's Alter-Ego—Basis of this Teaching in Words of Christ, especially in John's Gospel—The Value of the Spirit—The Work of the Spirit—The Person of the Spirit.

Baptism, the Symbol of Union with the Living Christ—Baptism always symbolic in Christ's Thought—Authority for, and Meaning of, Rite—Rite in Practice—Was Paul a Ritualist?—Like Christ, not himself anxious to baptize—How Paul treats Men—Paul's phrase "in Christ"—Its correlative "Christ in you"—Correspondences—The Truth derived from Christ.

The Lord's Supper, the Symbol of Communion—Was it instituted as a permanent Rite?—The Meaning of the Rite as explained by Christ in Anticipation—How Paul deals with Christ's Teaching—Reminder of constant need of Fellowship with the Risen Lord—How Fellowship is realised—Christ, by making His memorial a family Meal, meant by it Fellowship among His People with Him.

THE death of Christ, as we have seen, was the condensation into a single, many-sided event of the most potent of moral, spiritual, and religious forces. Starting from the

Saviour's pregnant utterances, His disciples, with varying fulness, developed different aspects of it in the light of the event. And, briefly summarised, what they taught amounted to this, that in virtue of the spirit in which that death was endured, the acknowledgment in it by man's representative of the righteousness of God's treatment of sin, the demonstration in it by God's representative of what God was willing to suffer to win back man's confidence, and the capacity it possessed for appealing to the deeper and finer sensibilities of human nature, God accepts it as ample satisfaction for man's sin against Him, and on the basis of it is willing to have a reconstituted humanity built up. On this footing He can forgive the past, and reinstate men in their proper relation to Himself.

But we saw also that, following Christ's own lead, His apostles never looked at the death of Christ apart from the thought of His resurrection. It is quite unnecessary to prove that the disciples believed and taught the literal resurrection of Jesus. The whole course of anti-supernatural criticism has been a determined effort to parry the force of the awkward fact that Christianity is built upon an empty tomb. And equally certain it is, that this belief of the disciples in the empty tomb owed its origin to the precise predictions of Jesus, and to their actual fulfilment by Him. It is not within our province to restate the argument for the Resurrection. It is enough to point out that hostile criticism is not content with its own attempts to invalidate the record, and has had to resort to the device of accepting the fact, and then either of seeking to resolve it into a so-called fact of the inner consciousness, not a literal event, or else of contending that belief in it is not essential to Christian faith.[1] That

[1] Harnack, *History of Dogma*, i. 85, note; Schwartzkopf, *Prophecies of Jesus Christ*, pp. 129–136.

I take for an elaborate confession of failure and an attempt to cover defeat.[1] Essential to present faith or not, it was of supreme significance to the faith of the earliest disciples. It restored their shattered hopes. It supplied an unanswerable argument with their fellow-countrymen. Followed up by the Ascension, it was their guarantee of the departure of Jesus to heaven, His entrance into glory, and His accession to the position of power, which He had asserted for Himself during His lifetime, and from which they expected His aid in their efforts to realise His kingdom. All this they associated with the actual fact. All that I take for granted.[2] What we have to consider is the position which Jesus predicted for Himself as the Crucified and Risen Lord, the results which He encouraged His disciples to expect from it, and their understanding of this as shown in their writings.

In investigating this subject, the most likely point from which to start is the Acts of the Apostles. This book begins with the record in successive chapters of two all-important events, the Ascension (chap. i.), and the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost (chap. ii.). In it, too, is seen a rapidly growing community, the members of which, amid great variety of opinion and custom in other directions, were at one in this, that in Christ's name they observed the ordinance of Baptism, and met for the Breaking of Bread. It is in connection with these matters that we discover their attitude towards, and beliefs with regard to, the great Founder of their community, learn what they thought as to His position after His resurrection, as to His relation to them, and as to their relation to Him.

[1] With the fact established it is not necessary to discuss attempts to explain away expressions of Jesus predictive of it, as if it had never occurred; *e.g.* Wendt on "the third day rise again" (*Teaching of Jesus*, ii. 265 ff).

[2] "The earthly Jesus might have founded a school; hero-worship might have sprung up round His name—a religion could only arise because the old community was convinced that in the resurrection and ascension of the Lord, God had revealed Himself" (J. Weiss, *Nachfolge Christi*, p. 83).

If we take up these points in turn, we shall find that round them gather the distinctive thoughts of Christ's followers, and be led to the germs of their convictions in words that had fallen from the lips of Christ.

I. *The Ascension.*—The mere fact of the Ascension meant little more to the disciples than that Jesus, their Risen Lord, was now finally separated from them. But departure in such a way was a symbolic anticipation of the predicted manner of His return, "with clouds" (Matt. xxiv. 30; Acts i. 9–11), and the conviction sank deep into their minds that Jesus had passed straight to the throne of God, to the right hand of power (Acts ii. 33–36, v. 31, vii. 55). That meant that He was now in the position to prosecute, in uninterrupted activity and vigour, the extension of His kingdom, to put into full operation all the spiritual forces at His command for the world-wide accomplishment of the work for which He had made such sacrifices upon earth, and to maintain the most constant vigilance over them and care for them. And with many a hint from other quarters, we have two great companion pictures of this activity of the Exalted Lord. These are, respectively, the Acts of the Apostles and the Apocalypse. The former lets us see the conflict waged with evil as it appeared in the sphere of history, and there worked itself out through human agents, by whom it was carried on, and in whom it was accomplished. The latter lets us see it in the spiritual plane, where, over against each other, stand the great elemental powers, between whom the antagonism ultimately rests.

In the Acts, there are the apostles, making a valorous attack on Jew and Greek, working miracles that arrest the attention, and compel the recognition, of their most determined adversaries, facing without flinching intolerance and persecution, refusing to be silenced, and standing their ground with a firmness that amazed their adversaries.

What is the secret of this heroic movement, which, in view of the feebleness of its agents, the smallness of the number of its original adherents, the slenderness of their intellectual equipment, and the vastness of their pretensions, has only been saved from ridicule and oblivion by its astounding success? Hear themselves. Are they asked for an explanation of their exuberant outburst at Pentecost? It is because the Risen Lord has more than kept His promise (Acts ii. 16–21, 33). Are they pressed to explain their power to heal? It is because Jesus is on the throne of the Universe, and they who trust Him have invoked His aid (Acts iii. 12 ff.). Are they met with a demand for some warrant for setting at naught the injunctions of the highest religious court of the land? They appeal to a higher Authority, the Lord at God's right hand (Acts iv. 7 ff., v. 28 ff.). Are they asked to tell men how they can escape the consequences of their sins, get quit of a bad past that is ruining them? They bid them adhere to Jesus in a spirit of true penitence and trust, and all will be forgiven (Acts ii. 37 ff.). All is due to the fact, that Jesus is for them the Living, Supreme Lord, on whom they can certainly count. Death has no terrors for a Stephen. Heaven opens; and he sees Jesus at the right hand of God (Acts vii. 56). Prison doors cannot hold Christ's commissioners (Acts v. 19, xii. 3 ff., xvi. 26). Is a new servant needed to carry on the work in a new direction? The Exalted Lord can apprehend His most bitter foe, turn him into His devoted slave, send him to a humble believer to be taught the power and sweetness of Christian brotherhood, and then use him to reach the most unlikely auditors, and compel them to listen to the awe-inspiring facts of the Christian faith (Acts ix. 1 ff.). Antioch, Ephesus, Athens, Corinth, Rome in quick succession fall under this mighty spell. The Acts of the Apostles are the Acts of the Risen Christ. These men are, they wish

to be, nothing else than the instruments of their Exalted Lord.

The Apocalypse shows us the same thing in another form. It is no longer Peter and John, Stephen and Paul, Philip and Barnabas and Silas and a score of others, led on by the invisible but Exalted Christ, pitted against Caiaphas and Herod, Annas and Tertullus, Felix and Festus, Agrippa and Nero, all in league against the Lord and His anointed. It is the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, carrying on His mighty conflict against all the forces of iniquity, sin in its head, the devil, and in all his agents, worldliness, militarism, sensuality, and even the religious spirit invoked under the disguise of the sensuous, the superstitious, and the idolatrous (the Beast, the Kings, the Whore, the False Prophet, Sodom and Egypt, Babylon). As one phase after another of the stupendous conflict, of which Paul also was deeply conscious (Eph. vi. 12), passes before the enthralled mind of the seer, in picture after picture he shows the progress of the judgments in which every new type of wickedness is successively routed and overcome. But ever one commanding figure controls the field. Now it is the Lamb that was slain, now Michael (= who is like God!) the Archangel, now the champion called "Faithful and True," "the Word of God," mounted on a white horse, and on his garment and on his thigh a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." All these are but varying names for Him who appears at the very outset, "He that liveth, and was dead, and is alive for evermore; and has the keys of Death and Hell." It is the Exalted Lord, who must reign, as Paul says, "till all things are put under His feet."

These two books, therefore, vibrating with the conviction that Christ has ascended to the throne of God, put in the clearest way possible one great belief of the early adherents of Jesus based thereon, and that is that the

Exalted Lord is in the most direct and energetic way prosecuting from heaven the great work, which He initiated here, of establishing that kingdom wherein dwelleth righteousness. It would not be difficult to show from the Epistles of Peter and of Paul that the same idea was familiar to them (cf., *inter alia*, Rom. viii. 34; Eph. i. 20; Col. iii. 1; 1 Pet. iii. 22; and cf. Mark xvi. 19; Heb. i. 3, x. 12). But it is not necessary to do so. It is only necessary to find the justification for this conviction in the words of Christ Himself. As Chap. V. has dealt with passages which speak of Christ's coming again as Judge, here we may restrict our attention to sayings which predict His abiding control of the course of the world pending that event. There is a passage which leads up to it. When the Seventy returned, their enthusiastic report on the power, which they discovered belonged to them in His name, was, "Lord, even the demons are subject unto us in Thy name." This called out a very notable reply: "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven" (Luke x. 17, 18). It expresses that, to the immediate consciousness of Jesus, a distinct stage had been reached in His conflict with the Evil One, when the body which He had been training reported their first success in the field. And He follows it up with a serious confirmation. This power was not more than He had anticipated. It lay in the authority and power with which He had invested them when He sent them out. It was a foretaste of greater things. But it was power given for use, not for display, and to be used in all humility (vv. 19, 20). A not less significant passage is Matt. xviii. 15–20. There Christ contemplates the coming existence of a community of His adherents, His Church. He invests them with very large powers of administration and appeal to God. But what safeguards this from the possibility of abuse, guarantees its use for edification and not for destruction, is the concluding assur-

ance, "where even two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."[1] The best commentary on the general understanding of such a promise is Paul's charge to the Corinthian Church (1 Cor. v. 3–5, or 2 Cor. ii. 5–11).[2] But this was all more than confirmed in the farewell words, and experience again attested it (Mark xvi. 19, 20). Take the statement as given in Matt. xxviii. 18–20, and the justification of the whole views of Acts stands out in bold relief. "All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore . . . and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." There is no force in the "therefore" without that concluding clause. It is this abiding presence with them of Him to whom all authority has been given, that makes the command not only momentous, but welcome, and fires those to whom it is given with eagerness to carry it into effect. They appreciate the force of that striking petition, which they had overheard, at the commencement of the Intercessory Prayer: "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee: even as Thou gavest Him authority over all flesh, that whatsoever Thou hast given Him, to them He should give eternal life" (John xvii. 1, 2). He already possesses the authority. He asks the place of glory from which He can use it with effect, not only directly, but still more, through those who already adhere to Him (xvii. 20).

But in studying Christ's own teaching here, what was said in reference to the Cross is true. Actions are as

[1] The emphasis on the small number was probably dictated by way of contrast to the ten heads of families, or the Minyan, requisite for the formation of a Jewish synagogue.

[2] Cf. Col. ii. 5. A comparison of those passages, in which Paul speaks of a certain sense in which he himself is present, though absent, with Christ's own utterances of a like nature concerning Himself, and Paul's references to the spiritual presence of Christ, only brings into stronger relief the difference between the two, and therefore between the two persons, Paul and Christ. The presence of Christ as real, actual; that of Paul, the figurative expression for intense interest and vivid imagination.

instructive as words. And it was by Christ's own deliberate action that the sequel to His death took the course it did. If His crucifixion was partly the crime of His enemies, partly His own act, His resurrection and ascension are spoken of partly as the work of the Father, partly as His own doing. It was not essential to His accession to the position on the divine throne, that He should return in visible form to this earth for a time, and then ascend before the rapt gaze of His followers. But He adopted that course in order to supply them with objective grounds for their faith in what He had promised. The purpose of the method of His resurrection and ascension was not that Christ might satisfy men, that though He was alive still, His work on earth was over, and He was gone to enjoy well-earned rest and reward. His ascension took place while He was blessing them (Luke xxiv. 51), and the outstretched arms have never been withdrawn. His ascension was not His signal of separation. It was the assurance that, with Him living and abiding at the very centre of heaven's activities, carrying their nature with Him there, they had a pledge of His abiding presence with them here, and an unfailing source of strength, courage, and comfort for all the work He had left them to do.[1] The mighty movement which, on the strength of these facts, His disciples undertook, and which shook the world and turned it upside down, was, as we have seen (Chap. V.), but the first evidence of His coming with power, which Jesus had told His murderers they should live to see.

II. *Pentecost.*—A flood of additional light falls on the matter, when we consider the second great event that meets us at the beginning of Acts, namely, Pentecost. The second chapter of the Acts is occupied with that

[1] Cf. Schwartzkopf, *Prophecies of Jesus Christ*, p. 146 ff.; J. C. Lambert, *The Omnipotent Cross*, p. 117 ff.

extraordinary manifestation, in which the apostles recognised the fulfilment of the special promise left them by the Risen Lord. Everything indicates that, while they were patiently, yet eagerly, awaiting the promised gift of the Spirit, they had no preconceived idea of the way in which it should come to them. They were all, doubtless, familiar with the story of how the Spirit came to Christ at His baptism in the form of a dove. But when on Pentecost the place where they were met resounded with the sweep of a hurricane, and flashes of fire played upon each of them, and when, as the result of it, they experienced an exhilaration of spirit, that would not keep silence but burst out in uncontrollable shouts of joy and praise, they were not long in understanding the event. Strangers might be perplexed, and ask in amazement what it meant. But Peter, with his fellow apostles, was at once ready with the explanation. It was a fulfilment of ancient prophecy of Messianic days, and, at the same time, a great implementing of His recent promise by their Exalted Lord, and so a new proof to them that He was really the Messiah, as they believed, and now in that position of power from which He could send to His followers the mightiest of agents, the Divine Spirit, to cheer their hearts and inspire their tongues. It was just what Jesus had taught them to expect. Long ago He had told them that the Holy Spirit would give them the right words to speak in any emergency in His service (Matt. x. 20; Luke xii. 12). Again and again, during His farewell talks with them, He had told them the Spirit would come to them, and what results would ensue (Mark xvi. 17–20). Indeed, at one of His last meetings with them, with His fine sense of the value of symbolic actions to impress great truths, He had breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John xx. 21–23). For the full reception of the gift He had bidden them wait at Jerusalem; and so con-

vinced were they of His sincerity, that they never thought of leaving the city until the blessing came, but occupied the intervening time in recruiting their ranks, so as to have all in readiness for the witness-bearing they were to be equipped to render. So Pentecost found them (Luke xxiv. 49; Acts i. 4, 12 ff.). Their experience then was no isolated event. It was repeated, not indeed in the same emblematic form, but with no less reality and effect, on every fresh accession to their ranks, and in every new community which the apostles reached (viii. 17, ix. 17, xiii. 52). So uniform was it that, until it supervened, men were not regarded as having entered into a full knowledge of Christ (Acts xix. 1–7). To use Paul's favourite phrase, "the earnest of the Spirit" was God's seal to the union of a heart to Jesus Christ by faith, and to a man's entrance thereby into the position of a son (2 Cor. i. 22, v. 5; Eph. i. 13, iv. 30; cf. Rom. viii. 14 ff.; Gal. iii. 1–14, iv. 5, 6). And the convincing proof to Peter, that he had followed divine guidance and no vain imagination, when he had preached to the Gentiles, was the fact that on them, as on his Jewish brethren at the first, there came the Holy Ghost (Acts x. 44, xi. 15–17).

But what did Holy Ghost suggest to these men? So far, it was a common heritage from the Old Testament. There it was the name for the divine energy operative in the world in the most varied directions, from the brooding over chaos at the Creation (Gen. i. 2) to the refining of the deepest emotions and holiest aspirations of a repentant soul (Ps. li.). It was the promised equipment of the Messiah (Isa. lxi. 1, etc.), and the expected characteristic of mankind in Messianic days (Joel ii.). In accordance with this, the opinion was prevalent among the apostolic writers that it was to the Holy Spirit the writers of the Old Testament owed their inspiration and their capacity to predict the coming Messianic times (Acts i. 16, cf. iv. 25 ff.; 1 Pet. i. 11).

In like manner, Luke attributes to the Spirit the utterances of these precursors of the Messiah, John the Baptist, Zacharias and his wife Elisabeth, and the aged Simeon (i. 15, 41, 67, ii. 25 ff.). Matthew (i. 18–20) and Luke (i. 35) alike represent the Holy Spirit as playing a most important part in the entrance of Christ into human nature. All the Synoptists tell of the incident at the baptism of Jesus (Matt. iii. 16; Mark i. 10; Luke iii. 21 f.), when in a signal way the Spirit came to Him at the moment of His consecration of Himself to the public prosecution of His life mission, and in doing so (Matt. iv. 1; Mark i. 12; Luke iv. 1; cf. Matt. xii. 18; Luke x. 21) they take occasion to show that they regarded the Holy Spirit as the guiding force in Christ's ordering of His life. It was this equipment of Jesus before the eyes of the Baptist that made him recognise in Him the one fitted to carry out the mission, of which he was the precursor, namely, a baptizing of men with the Holy Ghost and with fire (John i. 31 ff.; Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8; Luke iii. 16).

Though Christ Himself never enters into particulars as to His own birth, yet the substance of these utterances as to Christ has the justification of His words. At Nazareth Christ appeals to Isa. lxi. 1 as His commission, and He urges on His antagonists the solemnity of the issue, and the evidence it bore of the proximity of the Kingdom, when He in their midst was casting out demons by the Spirit of God. They might ignore Him in His humble guise with comparative impunity, but to malign the Spirit working in Him was nothing short of blasphemy (Matt. xii. 28 ff.). When Jesus promised the Holy Spirit, therefore, and when His disciples declared that they had at Pentecost received the gift, He meant and they meant this at least, that they were put in possession of an endowment with divine wisdom and power similar to what had been possessed by Jesus Himself. It was His, indeed, in so marked a manner that

John at the recollection of it breaks out, "God giveth not the Spirit by measure (unto Him). The Father loveth the Son, and has put everything in His hands" (John iii. 34, 35). But after Pentecost they discovered that that gift was theirs also.

In their own experience the outpouring of the Spirit produced in the apostles primarily an exuberant, holy joy, which found vent in an outburst of ecstatic praise (cf. Rom. v. 5; Eph. v. 18–20). From the account in Acts we are plainly intended to understand that one phase of the endowment was ability to speak in foreign languages (Acts ii. 6–11). But that is not all, nor the chief thing, implied in the gift of tongues. Indeed, there is no evidence that it ever again assumed that form, or qualified any apostle to address a foreign community in its own language, without the drudgery of learning it.[1] The gift of tongues is repeatedly mentioned (Acts x. 46, xix. 6), and the best clue to its common form is 1 Cor. xii.–xiv., where its value and importance are fully discussed (xii. 10, xiii. 1–8). The impression conveyed is that it was something like a spontaneous outpouring of joyous song (Acts ii. 4–13; cf. Eph. v. 18),—"songs without words," or in which the words were of quite secondary importance (1 Cor. xiv. 2, 6, 7, 13, 14),—the joyous counterpart of that other effort of the Spirit,—"groanings that cannot be uttered" (Rom. viii. 26). If we take the light of the subsequent conduct of the disciples on the subject, and note the word used to describe it, we shall get the best idea of what the gift of tongues at its richest and fullest meant. The word is παῤῥησία (πᾶν and ῥῆσις). It means the telling of everything. It is a favourite word to describe the plain, frank, fearless style in which Christ spoke (Mark viii. 32; John vii. 26, xviii. 20).

[1] Compare the case of Paul, who claims to have had this gift in special abundance (1 Cor. xiv. 18), and yet apparently at Lystra was ignorant of the speech of Lycaonia (Acts xiv. 11, 14).

And when the apostles became filled with the Spirit that dwelt in Him, they reproduced the Master's style in their speech to their fellow-men (Acts iv. 29, 31, etc.). But the term covers more. It is used by Paul, in Hebrews, and by John to express the holy frankness and joyous confidence with which the child of God speaks in His Father's presence (Eph. iii. 12; Heb. iv. 16; 1 John ii. 28, v. 14). Here, therefore, seems the best word to describe the effect as regards utterance of the presence of the Spirit in men, a word that covers everything described in Rom. v. 1–5, as flowing from the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.

The influences exercised by the Spirit may be divided into two classes—(1) those operative within the Church for its management and for its work in the world, and (2) those operative upon the life of the individual believer.

1. In the first case, the Spirit appears as the secret of the extraordinary mastery which those speaking under His influence are able to exercise over their auditors. He is the Spirit of Power. Words spoken at His incentive strike home to the consciences of men, and whether they are broken into concern and contrition or hardened into more determined antagonism, they cannot resist the influence. The source of the power lies in the fact that He is the Spirit of Truth, as is clear in the tragic case of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts v. 3–9). But it is ever the same, with Peter at Pentecost (Acts ii. 37), with Stephen before the Sanhedrin (Acts vi. 10, vii. 54), with Paul in Cyprus silencing Elymas the sorcerer (Acts xiii. 9 ff.).

Then, again, the Spirit guides Philip to the side of the eunuch, and Peter to the household of Cornelius (Acts viii. 29, x. 19). He is the source of prophetic admonitions of coming famine, and of trials and danger to Paul, both directly, and through other gifted individuals (Acts xi. 28, xx. 23, xxi. 11). It is under His guidance Paul and Barnabas are set apart for their missionary career

(Acts xiii. 2), the Council comes to a finding on the Gentile question (Acts xv. 28), and Paul and Silas are led to the coast of Asia to receive the call to carry the gospel to Europe (Acts xvi. 6 f.). It is through Him men, elected and ordained by their brethren (Acts xiv. 23), come to office in the Church (Acts xx. 28). And it is in keeping with this that in the Apocalypse His is the voice through which Christ addresses His solemn counsels to the Church, whether they be words of reproof or encouragement (Rev. i. 4, ii. 7, 11, etc.; cf. Acts ix. 31). Indeed, throughout the Acts, the possession of the Spirit is the accompaniment and complement of that intense conviction of the abiding presence of the Risen Lord. No theological deduction is drawn there from it, but the fact is significant.

When we come to the Epistles to the Corinthians, we find such a diversity of gifts in play in the service of the Church, that men were losing sight of their common origin, and had to be reminded that all came from the same Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 4–11). He is the vital bond which binds the whole Church into one (Eph. iv. 3, 4; cf. iv. 1–13 and 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11; Heb. ii. 4). And in the gifts, which Paul enumerates, he is simply gathering up the influences which we can see at work through the Spirit's guidance in the course of the Acts of the Apostles.

2. In the life of the individual believer the Spirit is (1) the author of holy character, and (2) the perennial source of knowledge of the truth (cf. 2 Thess. ii. 13).

(1) The chief authority for the former statement is Paul[1] (cf. 1 Pet. 1, 2). He agrees with the great thought of the Apocalypse, of which there is just a hint in Peter, that the Church is a company of priests, ministering to God in the temple of the heavenlies (Rev. i. 6, v. 10, vii. 14, 15, xix. 8, xxii. 3; 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9). We have had suggestions of this in his sacrificial view of life. But he puts it in a way peculiar

[1] Cf. Gunkel, *Die Wirkungen des heiligen Geistes*, p. 77 ff.

to himself, when he says to the Corinthians, "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God?" (1 Cor. iii. 16, vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16), and to the Ephesians speaks of that glorious building on Christ, the foundation on which Jews and Gentiles, reconciled to one another in Christ, grow into a holy temple in the Lord (Eph. ii. 21). His argument in proof of this is the fact of the indwelling of the Spirit. Now the peculiar feature of a temple is that it is a consecrated building, set apart for God—holy. And if the presence of the Spirit in this community constitutes it a living temple it must be because of His sanctifying influence. This result, however, is not attained *en masse*. If the whole body is a temple, it is because every heart is a little temple, a shrine, in which the Spirit dwells. And while other references are to the community, 1 Cor. vi. 19 is strictly individual, and what is implied there is developed at length in two passages, Gal. v. 13–25 and Rom. vi.–viii. The former of these gives a sketch of what is meant by liberty, the liberty of sons, which is secured by Christ for those who trust Him. It does not mean licence or disregard of the provisions of God's law. It means a glorious deliverance from the slavery of the lust of the flesh. Not that the conflict with sin is over. It is little more than begun. The entrance of the Spirit has brought it to the acute stage. But their liberty has secured this for them, that now they can follow the Spirit's lead. And that is the lead which men ought to follow, if they profess to belong to Christ (ver. 24), to be living by the Spirit, not under the law but under grace. To do anything else would be, as Hebrews puts it, to do despite to the Spirit of grace (Heb. x. 29). What then are the fruits of the Spirit's leading? Not only a sturdy resistance to all forms of immorality, but "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance." These are but samples of the whole field of Christian

virtues, elements in that holy life after the pattern of Christ's own, which is the type of life that corresponds with His kingdom (Chap. V.). It is towards these that the Holy Spirit impels men, and it is by response to His impulse that men attain them. And the very results for which Christ gave His life, namely, that the world might be crucified unto men and men unto the world, are not attained in a man, until the Holy Spirit has gained such an ascendency over him that this life becomes a second nature (Gal. v. 24, 25; cf. vi. 13–16).

The passage in Romans (chaps. vi.–viii.) is still more instructive. It comes, in the Epistle, after the full discussion of the retrospective effects of the death of Christ, securing for men their break with a bad past and pardon for it and their justification before God, their restoral, that is, to their right relationship to Him. At this point Paul supposes a would-be Antinomian objection to his teaching. His reply is that sin is something the believer is dead and done with. What death meant for Christ, it means for men united with Him in His death; and that is, the end of sin's dominion.

But what does Paul mean by this? Does he mean that the believer from the hour of his union with Christ does not sin? Was Paul what we call a perfectionist? That has been lately maintained by Wernle.[1] He would have us believe that Paul was such an enthusiastic idealist, so completely under the spell of the Parousia,—though what that has to do with it, is difficult to see,—that for himself he had lost all consciousness of sin, and looked for the same in every sincere fellow-believer. The contention is absurd on the face of it. Paul's solicitous dealings with Churches, wherever he saw backsliding or feared relapse, are fatal to such a view. But two things in this very passage refute it. (1) First of all, here Paul puts himself exactly in

[1] *Der Christ und die Sünde bei Paulus.*

line with John (1 Ep. i. 6–ii. 2, iii. 6, etc.). John, in his first Epistle, goes the length of saying in so many words, "Whosoever abideth in Christ, sinneth not" (iii. 6). Yet nobody on the strength of that would say that John taught that from the hour of his believing in Jesus a man never sinned. Immediately chap. i. 6–ii. 2 would refute him. There in his favourite antithetic forms John puts the whole case. The ideal undoubtedly is sinlessness. That is the aim towards which the believer, in fellowship with God, strives, and to which his teachers impel him. If he were all that he wishes to be, that would be his happy position. But the fatal fact is that, in spite of the best efforts and desires, sin persists, and the only resource and consolation is frank and full confession, the inexhaustible power of Christ the Advocate, the propitiating and cleansing blood, and the consequent forgiveness which God will certainly bestow. And so we understand John when he says, "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God" (iii. 9). He means that the ruling principle is no longer sin. Not that is the master. The man is controlled by the persisting germ of holy life. Righteousness is his desire and effort. Sins are an accident, not a habit; a source of sorrow, pain, and regret, from which ever more and more determinedly he turns away. The sixth chapter of Romans develops the very same idea in Paul's own way. Those men, he says, are servants of righteousness whose habit it is to devote themselves to righteousness as its eager servants, seeking therein their fruit unto sanctification, and the end everlasting life. That disposition is inevitable in the believer. With him the love of sin is dead, and the practice of it is being rapidly supplanted by the practice of holiness. (2) What further confirms this is the striking passage vii. 7–viii. 2. Two questions are asked about this passage: Is it autobiography? and is it true of a

man before, or after, conversion? There can be very little doubt, from the intensity of the passage, that every word springs from Paul's own experience. And if we lay aside all preconceptions, either as to the impossibility of an unconverted man having feelings like this, or of such a state of conflict still prevailing in the breast of a man under the control of God's Spirit, and if we simply look at the position of the passage in the course of Paul's disquisition, we shall not hesitate for a moment to say that in it he is describing an experience of a regenerate man. He has already carried us far past the stage of initial believing contact with Christ (v. 1). In chaps. vi. and viii. he is undoubtedly dealing with the experiences of men in union with Christ. It would therefore be a quite unaccountable leap backward to find in the midst of this (vii. 7–viii. 2) a description of pre-regenerate experience. But if this argument is sound, then here is Paul, painfully conscious of the persistency of sin, of the terrible hold which it still retains, and of the persistent conflict to which it calls, even in the life of a believer. After sanctification is well in progress, the side of it which is mortifying the flesh is no serene task, unstained by penitential tears, but a struggle which reduces almost to despair, and in which victory only accrues through a help more than human: "I thank my God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Now here we return to our proper subject, namely, How does deliverance come through the Lord Jesus Christ? The eighth chapter of the Epistle is the reply. It is through the gracious aid of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (cf. 1 Thess. iv. 1–8). That Spirit comes to dwell in a man, as soon as he becomes a son of God. It is a quickening spirit that calls into exercise spiritual aspirations, impels by its aid and intercession to prayerfulness (cf. Eph. ii. 18–22, vi. 18), and produces that frame of mind which delights in the will of God. The Spirit gives that sense of confidence

in God under all contingencies, which imparts courage to a man to attempt the life of holiness, which before seemed hopeless.[1]

(2) In the writings of John, the other side of the Spirit's work comes to the front. The Holy Spirit is the source of the knowledge of the truth. Not that this is peculiar to John. When Paul had weighty questions in morals to decide, his anxiety was to discover the mind of the Spirit (1 Cor. vii. 40). And in 1 Cor. ii. 10–16 he elaborates the part of the Spirit as the Revealer to men of the deep things of God. But John specially dwells on this. In the Revelation it was when he was in the Spirit, *i.e.* in fullest enjoyment of that elevation and insight which the Spirit generates, that the visions of the future broke upon him (Rev. i. 10, iv. 2, xvii. 3, xxi. 10). In his First Epistle, as in his Apocalypse, he discusses the manifestations of Antichrist, though not in the symbolic figures in which, in the Revelation, the whole antichristian movement is portrayed (*sc.* the dragon, the beast, the false prophet, the great whore), but in the individuals in whom Antichrist is to be seen among men. "There have arisen many antichrists" (1 John ii. 18–23). And the serious matter is that, in many instances, they have grown up within the circle of the Christian community. How then are the Christians to distinguish the false from the true? It is in virtue of their anointing from the Holy One. That abides in the true disciple, and consequently he knows all things. He knows, as Paul says (1 Cor. xii. 3), that "no man speaking by the Spirit of God saith, 'Jesus is anathema'; and no man can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' but in the

[1] "With the opening of the heavens a great redemption comes and, by presenting an infinite object of personal affection, converts the life of Duty into the life of Love, and reinforces the individual will by 'the Spirit that beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are children of God.' The point of contact between Ethics and Religion is thus analogous to that between the bondage of the Law and the freedom of the Gospel" (Martineau, *Study of Religion*, i. 26).

Holy Spirit"; or, as John says himself in the connection (1 John ii. 22 f.; cf. iv. 2 ff.), "Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" The Spirit is the great equipment for discerning spirits, because He is the truth, and He gives unmistakable guidance as to what is the truth (1 John v. 7, R.V.). But it is to be observed that truth with John is not something purely intellectual, nor yet simply what is in accordance with fact.[1] It is the real as opposed to the illusionary. It is practical, something not simply to be thought, but something to be done (1 John i. 6). It is embodied as fully in brotherly love as in sincere confession. These are, indeed, inseparable (1 John iv. 20; cf. iii. 17; Jas. i. 26, 27, ii. 15, 16). And it is when we observe this that we see that there is no vital difference between saying that the Holy Spirit is the Author of personal holiness, and that He is the source of the knowledge of the truth. If our conception of truth be as wide as John's, the two coalesce. There is then, too, no difficulty in understanding those passages which speak of saving and sanctifying influences as due to the Word or the Truth, as if these indicated a different view from that which attributes them to the work of the Spirit. The Word is simply the expression in which the Truth is embodied, and by which the Spirit operates. And Paul and John have simply gone to the roots of things, when they lay this bare and emphasise the agent without belittling the instrument, of which at other times they speak in enthusiastic terms.

Before passing to the teaching of Christ to show the source from which these writers reached this wonderful conception of the Holy Spirit, the divine agent working in them for holiness and truth, one further point in their thought must be considered, and that is, how did they think of this Spirit? What, or who, is He? It would be a little daring to say dogmatically whether the Holy Spirit,

[1] See Wendt, *Teaching of Jesus*, i. 257 ff.

as presented in the Old Testament, was by Christ's contemporaries thought of as a Person or not. The language used is on the borderland, sometimes suggesting no more than a divine energy at work in man, at other times seeming to imply a great deal more. And in the New Testament there is much to which full justice would be done, if we took Spirit to mean no more than a subtle influence exercised by God on and in the human mind. Much said by the Synoptists requires no more. And the same is true of the Apocalypse, and of very much of the Acts of the Apostles. But, on the other hand, the Spirit appears in connections that seem to require personal consciousness and activity. When Ananias and Sapphira deceive the apostles, Peter says they lie to the Holy Ghost. John (1 Ep. v. 7, R.V.) speaks of the Spirit as the Witness-bearer, though there the force is somewhat broken by the immediate identification of this with the witness of God. Stephen speaks of men resisting the Holy Spirit (Acts vii. 51), and Paul of their grieving the Spirit (Eph. iv. 30). In 1 Cor. ii. 10 ff. he uses the analogy of a man's spirit to illustrate the familiarity of the Spirit of God with the things of God, and at first sight that might seem to militate against the idea of Personality. But there would have been no reason for appealing to this human analogy, if, in the ordinary thought of the men to whom he was writing, the Holy Spirit, whom they knew as operative in themselves, had not acquired for them a certain independence of existence within the Deity. And so the thought of the passage bears a striking resemblance to Christ's argument for His own acquaintance with the things of God, based not on absolute identity with the Father, but on closest essential affinity. What makes this passage all the more instructive is its correlative in Romans (viii. 26, 27). There, in place of the Spirit, on the ground of His relation to God, being the source to men of the knowledge of things

divine, He is the source of a knowledge of things human to Him who searcheth the hearts. Dwelling in men, understanding them, He is able to make intercession for them to Him who knoweth the mind of the Spirit. It would be as legitimate on the strength of this passage to deny any distinction between the Holy Spirit and the heart in which He dwells, as to deny His Personality within the Godhead on the ground of the other. Taken together, they imply a very close affinity with both God and man, but also, for that very reason, a definite relative independence.

Still it is easy to exaggerate the extent of that independence. Nothing is more striking than the freedom with which the Spirit is spoken of as the Spirit of Jesus (Acts xvi. 7), or, even when operative in the prophets of the Old Testament, as the Spirit of Christ (1 Pet, i. 11), a form which is also repeatedly found in Paul. The genitive in each case, as also in the phrase 'Spirit of God,' seems to denote the origin or source, not of His existence, but of His presence with men. He is not identical with the Father or the Son. He has been given by God, sent by Christ. But while the sense of distinction is thus well marked, it constantly tends to disappear. And no passage is more instructive than Rom. viii. 9 ff. There He is spoken of indifferently as the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Him who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead, and the Spirit of Christ. But what is still more striking is the apparent equivalence between the indwelling of the Spirit and the indwelling of Christ. In successive clauses stand these equivalent expressions: "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin," etc. This easy natural passage from the one to the other forbids us thinking that Paul so distinguished between God and Christ and His Spirit as to lose sight

of a deep and true sense in which they are one. And the truest conception of the Spirit, as it existed in the mind of the most penetrating thinker of the apostolic age, is that of the alter-ego of the Exalted Christ. He is the one through whom Christ can continue in immediate living touch with everyone of His dependants, and operate graciously both within them individually and among them as a community. He is as truly divine as Christ Himself is. Indeed, when He is so closely linked at once with God and Christ, His divinity becomes one of the best proofs of the nature and reality of the divinity of Christ.

What, then, is the basis for this teaching about the Holy Spirit, which meant so much to the Early Church, in the teaching of Christ Himself? We have seen already, that even in the Synoptics, the Spirit, in some of His activities, was very definitely promised to the disciples by Christ both before and after His resurrection, and that after His ascension they were waiting in daily expectation of the fulfilment of this promise, till at Pentecost it came. This was the gift which, long before, Christ had told them was the characteristic blessing with which the Father would convey to them, in answer to their prayers, every good thing in the kingdom (Luke xi. 13; cf. Matt. vii. 11).[1] In it what had been the peculiar endowment of a favoured few in the Old Testament (Matt. xxii. 43) would become the common property of men. Thus they would be specially fitted for bearing witness to Him and to His cause (Luke xxiv. 44–49; Acts i. 5, 8). In the teaching about blasphemy, too, He draws a distinction between the Son of man and the Holy Spirit, which is significant for the Spirit's personality, while the fixing

[1] In the two passages which refer to it (Luke xi. 13 and Matt. vii. 11), we have an instance of repetition (Chapter III.) which accounts for the variety of form. But it is significant that Christ should treat the gift of the Holy Spirit as equivalent to all good, which men can desire. Given the Holy Spirit, everything becomes good.

upon any word spoken against the Holy Spirit as of the very essence of blasphemy is decisive as to His divinity (Matt. xii. 31 ; Luke xii. 10). Were there nothing more than this, it would still be legitimate and quite in keeping with Christ's methods to hold that what the disciples taught as to the Spirit, out of their experience of the enjoyment of the gift of the Spirit, was only the unfolding of what Jesus implied. But what these statements in the Synoptics really afford is confirmation from a wider area of the specific and definite teaching, which is to be found in such fulness in the Gospel of John, especially in chaps. xiv. and xvi.

To begin with, we find in these chapters a gauge by which to estimate the value Christ attached to the presence of the Spirit. He says, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you" (xvi. 7). Christ regarded the coming of the Spirit as of such moment for His apostles and their work for Him in the world, that it was worth their while to lose the coveted privilege of His own gracious presence in order to secure it. Christ never explains in so many words why His departure was necessary to the coming of the Spirit. But, if we may take as a clue John's remark on the matter, "the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (vii. 39), the reason was this. There was nothing to prevent the Spirit being in the world, while Jesus was there in bodily presence; but, until Jesus by His death attained His glory and furnished the materials with which the Spirit was to work, He could not effect the results which Jesus contemplated through Him. When once Jesus had suffered, risen, and ascended, the time had come when a divine Agent, not limited by fetters of space and time as Jesus had been during His sojourn, should be sent into the world to operate everywhere.

And with the prospect of such a one to be with them, Christ could assure His disciples that their loss through His departure would be more than made up to them.

The work, which the Spirit was to do, was to bring men into the kingdom by the new birth, and supply them with the qualifications for living there. This is attested by Christ in His conversation with Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (iii. 5). What that means loses all air of mystery, when we recall John the Baptist's testimony, "He that sent me to baptize with water, He said unto me, Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon Him, the same is He that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost" (i. 33).[1] According to John, his own baptism was pre-eminently associated with repentance. But repentance prior to Christ would only take men back to a more sincere Mosaism. Christ's mission was to carry men right beyond this, and infuse into them a new life, animated by a new spirit of sonship; and the Agent in this was to be the Holy Spirit, bestowed by Him. This was baptizing with the Holy Ghost. This was being born of water and of the Spirit. Men thus equipped were fit to enter the kingdom and to live within it.

The way in which this was to be effected far and wide is not explained till we reach chaps. xiv.–xvi. A hint of it was given in the magnificent promise at the feast of Tabernacles, when Jesus stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of

[1] It is no extravagant assumption to suppose that Nicodemus, to whom Christ was speaking, and who was evidently deeply interested in the whole movement, was familiar with the gist of this important and characteristic utterance of John the Baptist, a man who had so attracted the attention of men of Nicodemus' own class, that they had sent a deputation to interview him (cf. John i. 19 ff.). The references in the New Testament to the distinction which Jesus makes are frequent (Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8; Luke iii. 16; Acts i. 5, xi. 16, etc.).

his belly shall flow rivers of living water." "But this," says John, "spake He of the Spirit" (vii. 37 ff.). Such abundance of supply suggests overflowing for the benefit of others. And so, when we come to chaps. xiv.–xvi., we find that while the work, which the Spirit is to do, is largely upon the world, convicting it of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (xvi. 8–14), yet to effect it He comes as a gift to the disciples. He comes to teach them all things, partly by bringing to their memory things they had already learnt from Christ (xiv. 26), partly by setting the things they knew of Christ in their proper and full light, partly by showing them things to come, and thus leading them into all the truth (xvi. 13 f.). But when we recall that, in John's vocabulary truth meant, as we have seen, not simply correct thinking, but right acting,[1] we understand that the Spirit of truth is not only an enlightener, but a sanctifier, and we are not surprised that the results which He achieves (conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgment, xvi. 8) are moral and religious rather than intellectual. But what is the purpose of this training and perfecting of the disciples? It is that in them He may have the instruments through which to effect His work on other men. He is to bear witness of Christ, but it is through the disciples. If He supplies directly the prick of conviction in men's hearts, it is as a response there to the effects which He has produced upon them through the lives and lips of the disciples (xv. 26 f.). It is in view of this that He is so appropriately called the Paraclete, the Advocate that is called in to help to plead the cause, the Comforter, in the good old English sense which remembers that "fort" means strong, not the Consoler, but the Encourager, the strengthening comrade of devoted men.

But who is this Spirit, to whom Christ delegates His

[1] Cf. p. 325, and see Wendt there quoted.

own work? Is there anything to justify Paul's remarkable interchange of terms that led us to speak of the Spirit as Christ's alter-ego?[1] The answer to this is found in the first reference to the Spirit in the course of chap. xiv. 16 ff. Jesus has been speaking of His near departure, and the inestimable advantages He will be able to secure for His disciples thereby, *e.g.* a place in the house of many mansions, a new plea and claim in prayer, etc. (xiv. 1–15). This fails, however, to dispel the lurking dismay at His departure. So Jesus adds, "I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter—*i.e.* one to take My place—that He may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth" (vv. 16, 17); and then almost immediately He follows that up with what is evidently intended for an explanatory equivalent, "I will not leave you desolate—orphans—I will come to you" (ver. 18). Then, with reference to both the Spirit and Himself, He speaks on almost identical lines of the contrast between the incapacity of the world to recognise them and the ability of the disciples to do so. From all this only one result can follow, namely, that the relationship of the Spirit to Christ is so close that the presence of the one is practically the presence of the other. Moreover, when the nature of the presence in each case is in the immediate context repeatedly spoken of as an indwelling, the conviction is confirmed that, in some very true sense, this divine Spirit of truth and Christ Himself are one. And yet it would not be true to say that the Spirit is simply the spiritual presence of the Exalted Christ, as if they were in reality indistinguishable. Christ distinguishes quite as pronouncedly as He identifies. If

[1] The comparison between Paul and John in Sanday and Headlam's *Commentary on Romans*, p. 200 f., is really a comparison between Paul and words of Christ. It is Christ who speaks of "another Comforter," and the phrase serves to bring into relief the distinction present to Christ's mind between Himself and the Spirit.

He comes in the Spirit, it is because at His request the Father sends the Spirit. And He speaks of Him in terms that imply as real distinction as exists between the Father and Himself. In these words of Jesus, then, we have an almost exact counterpart to what we found from the pen of Paul in Romans. Ripe Christian experience exactly tallies with Christ's predictions. Men rejoice in the presence in them and with them of the Spirit of God, the gift of the Risen Lord, and in Him they feel that once more they are in immediate touch with their Living Lord, as He had said.

III. We pass now to consider the fact that the disciples we meet with in the Acts were men who were in the habit of observing two ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. For the observance of both of these they appealed to the authority of Christ. In reference to the significance of the former rite, it is not necessary to repeat what was said just a few lines above. It is enough to note how intimately it associates the symbolism of the rite with the operations of the Holy Spirit. That the rite is primarily symbolic is manifest from the wider language of Christ. Twice over, when referring to the grand crisis of His own life, His passion, He calls it a Baptism. Under the staggering sense of its gravity, as it steadily drew near, He exclaimed, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished" (Luke xii. 50). And when James and John urged their wild request, in order to sober them and make them realise its consequences, He challenges them, "Can ye drink the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" (Mark x. 38), as though to say, Can you endure the searching test and vigil through which I must pass in loyalty to My mission and as proof of its worth? Baptism, therefore, in any case, was for Christ some-

thing figurative, a possible symbol for more than one great spiritual reality, represented by the word or sign. The rite was in use prior to Christ's time. It was even practised by His disciples during His earthly ministry and seemingly with His approval, although He did not baptize Himself (John iv. 1–2; cf. iii. 22 f.). But as that which Christian baptism specially symbolised, namely, the operations of the Spirit on the lives of men with the completed work of Christ, was not yet given, because Christ was not yet glorified, it is questionable whether that baptism of Christ's lifetime really meant more than John's baptism, namely, repentance in view of the advent of Messiah.

Baptism, distinctively Christian baptism, as a rite among believers in Christ, so far as the records attest, owes its origin to a definite command of the Risen Lord. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you" (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20), "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved" (Mark xvi. 16). It was to be a symbol, that is to say, to the men who became disciples on having the gospel preached to them (Mark xvi. 15), of their response to it, and of God's acceptance of that response, their entrance by faith into the sphere of the gracious influences that are exercised by Father, Son, and Spirit, and their engagement to carry out all that is involved therein, namely, that loyalty to truth, practice of holiness, and activity of service, which Jesus had claimed from His disciples during His lifetime among them. In other words, it was the symbol of the establishment of a union with Christ. There is Christ's word, on which everything else is built. He does not enter into fuller explanations. What the rite as previously

practised by John and by the disciples themselves conveyed, and what had been said in anticipation of the baptism which Christ was to bestow, would serve as an adequate commentary.

When we turn to the Acts of the Apostles, we find baptism constantly practised, whenever men are admitted to the company of believers. The formula in use there is modified. It is "into the name of Christ," or "into Christ." It is associated with the laying on of hands, a kindly custom which grew up expressive of welcome into the circle of believers, and accorded to all who professed their faith in baptism, not simply to those ordained to office (Acts ii. 38–41, viii. 12–19, 36–39, ix. 17–19, x. 47, 48). It is explained as referring to repentance and remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost, in one word, salvation (texts just quoted, and Acts xvi. 15, 33, xviii. 8, xix. 5–7; Heb. vi. 2 ff.). And 1 Pet. iii. 21 expresses the consciousness and intention of the man who honestly accepts the rite. It is therefore the symbol of a union already completed with Christ, and because of this union with Christ, the baptized individual is on his baptism recognised as a pledged member of the Christian community.

But it may be asked, Is not Paul strikingly at variance with this? Does he not reverse the order? Is not baptism with him the means of union with Christ? Is he not in effect a Ritualist? for this is, by implication, the contention of Ritualists, be they Lutherans or Anglicans or, even unconsciously, Baptists. If this were true of Paul, it would indicate a serious breach between the teaching of Paul and his Master. But the first suspicious thing is that Paul was not supremely anxious about baptizing people. Just as Jesus Himself in the days of His flesh, while keen to secure men's adherence to Himself, baptized not, but left it as a minor matter to subordinates; so Paul vigorously protests,

"Jesus Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel," and he thanks God that he had baptized practically nobody in Corinth (1 Cor. i. 17 ff.). Could this have been possible, if to him baptism had been a *sine quâ non* of salvation or of the spiritual life? Most certainly not. But if that is so, how are we to explain the terms Paul uses in Rom. vi. 3 ff. and Gal. iii. 27 (cf. Col. ii. 12), which are so emphatic that even such cautious writers as the authors of the *International Commentary on Romans* think that they warrant them in saying, "the sprinkling of the blood of Christ seals that covenant with His people to which baptism admits them."[1] There is no doubt that Paul in these passages does speak, in the very strongest terms, of what is involved in a man's accepting this rite of baptism. It is all summed up in one word, "as many as were baptized into Christ, put on Christ" (Gal. iii. 27). Baptism involved a union with Christ so close that not only were men committed thereby to live a life of holiness, but it became a spiritual impossibility for them to do anything else. They were, in their acceptance of baptism, dead, buried, and risen with Christ. They had passed through all He had passed through, and their whole subsequent life was simply a surrender to the impelling force of the life within, namely, Christ. If baptism involves this, is it not the supreme factor in the spiritual life? Before saying so it has to be remembered that Paul always treats men as true to all they profess. The community at Corinth are spoken to as saints, not because the blemishes that disfigured that community were compatible with saintliness, but because they were not. So in

[1] Sanday and Headlam, *Romans* vi. 9 ff. Contrast with this the trenchant words of Beyschlag: "This is to make the letter of the apostle contradict his meaning and spirit. How are we to conceive that the apostle, whose whole doctrine of the way of salvation hitherto has advanced in a psychological and ethical way, should all at once take a leap into the magical, and unite the profoundest moral action of grace with an outward rite from which the unrighteous could never be excluded" (*New Testament Theology*, ii. 196). The whole paragraph is admirable.

the case of baptism. This rite symbolised a great truth of union with Christ, the result of men's response in faith to Christ's approaches. And men who submitted to this rite, by doing so offered, of their own accord, a formal testimony to the reality of that union as an experience of their inner life. And when Paul addresses them, treating them as honest men, and looking at their baptism from the side of their own act in accepting it, he presses on them what they have committed themselves to, when they entered that union with Christ, which the rite symbolised. The matter of supreme moment for Paul therefore was not baptism, but the union which it represented. He only uses the observance of the rite for the purpose for which the institution of such rites is intended, namely, to enforce the solemnity of the thing symbolised. He agrees with his fellow-apostles and with his Master.

For this union, Paul, "the prince of mystics,"[1] had a striking phrase, ἐν Χριστῷ. It has its correlative in the idea of Χριστὸς ἔν τινι. And Holtzmann is right in saying that "the significance of it is only understood from a comparison of the conceptions 'Christ' and 'Spirit.'"[2] But that comparison is not to be made along lines which, on the basis of 2 Cor. iii. 17, identify Christ and Spirit (cf. Chap. VI.). It is to be made in view of the true relationship between the Risen Christ and the Spirit, His messenger, which we have just been considering. We are helped to the sense of it by Phil. iii. 8–11. There Paul states the controlling crave of his heart, "to win Christ and be found in Him." This to him was the secret of standing before God and of successful advance along the whole line of spiritual development. It describes a relation so close, so vital, so significant for spiritual life, that it is simply impos-

[1] Sabatier, *Francis of Assisi*, p. 293. See whole paragraph, and cf. Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory*, ii. 79.

[2] H. J. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 79.

sible to find terms sufficiently strong, earthly relations sufficiently intimate, to say all of it that should be said.[1] It is not once or twice, but constantly that the phrase recurs, till we feel that for Paul Christ is the sphere of being, the atmosphere in which alone a man can truly live or breathe (Col. ii. 6, 7). For the Christian, everything he thinks, purposes, says, does, experiences, will be "in Christ." At times Paul expresses the union by the preposition σύν instead of ἐν (though the "with Christ" is in virtue of the "in Christ," a result, not an alternative), and then his analysis of life is a being crucified with Christ (Gal. ii. 20), a being buried with Him (Rom. vi. 3), a dying daily with Him (1 Cor. xv. 31), a being risen with Him, a living with Him (Rom. vi. 8), and, since He is seated at the right hand of God, a cherishing of thoughts and seeking of ideals and objects as unworldly and spiritual as are those dearest to the heart of Christ (Col. iii. 1–4). Christ is the garment which envelops him (Gal. iii. 27). His life is hid with Christ in God (Col. iii. 3).

But, as I have said, the correlative is "Christ in us." "Christ liveth in me," says Paul (Gal. ii. 20), and his grave concern for the Galatians, to whom he says it, is, that the same should be true of them: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you" (Gal. iv. 19; cf. 2 Cor. xiii. 5). And at Rom. viii. 10 this indwelling of Christ appears in that passage where the intimacy of the connection between Christ and the Spirit comes into such prominence. It is the subject for which Paul prays in that outpouring of his soul for the Ephesians (iii. 14 ff.). It is "the great mystery" which it is his to preach, "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. i. 27, ii. 9), passages in Colossians from which it becomes evident once more how closely this thought is associated with the symbolism of baptism. It is in this intimacy of union with

[1] Cf. Principal Caird, *University Sermons*, p. 106 f.

Christ that Paul sees the possibility of holiness. Here enters the divine energy, which is able to master all unworthy, wicked tendencies, and supply the irresistible impulses to the good works, for which, as God's workmanship (poem), men were created in Christ Jesus (Eph. ii. 10).

But is Paul alone in this thought? It has been contended that the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ is of his coining. But even if that be so, the parallel of the thought is to be found in John's Epistles, and has its affinities in Peter, and even in James. The whole idea of a divine begetting, which is found alike in James, Peter, and John (see Chap. V.), supplies the explanation of the process by which the union is effected. It is the entrance of Christ, who is the life, into men's beings (cf. Paul's striking phrase, "Christ, who is our life," Col. iii. 4). But the result of this is that God dwells in them and they in God, and it is through the possession of the Spirit that they are aware of the fact. It is in virtue of the divine life in them that they are able to resist the seductions of the world and attain to holiness. This life in them is the root of sonship, and the honour and hope it confers impels to a holy conformity to the image of Christ (1 John iii. 1–4).

But here once more we are carried back to the farewell discourses in John xiv.–xvii., *i.e.* to Christ Himself. The union is indeed suggested in that view of the solidarity of life, which we have already recognised as familiar to Christ, even from the Synoptics. But in John's Gospel it is the very essence of the great parable of the Vine and the Branches (xv. 1 ff.). There Christ goes to the secret of lives that can please God by the fruits they bear of obedience to God's holy commands (cf. Gal. v. 22–25). And it is found in an inseparable union between Christ and them: "I am the vine, ye are the branches. . . . Without, *i.e.* apart from, Me, ye can do nothing. . . . Abide in Me and I in you." And the whole paragraph, in ever-varying phrase,

makes plainer and plainer what is the union of hearts and interests, of generous self-bestowal and confidence reposed, and of answering faith and service, in which Christ and His followers become one. What is here expounded as a glorious coming experience for His disciples, Christ next makes the subject of request in the Intercessory Prayer. To ensure at once their perfecting in holy, consecrated service, and the success of the great mission in the world which the Father had committed to Him, and which, now that it had reached the successful completion of its first and crucial stage, He was passing on to them, He prays for a union with them so close, so complete, that the only parallel to suggest it is in the relation He bore to the Father Himself, and which, indeed, will be the crown of His great scheme: "that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one." Once more we are back to Christ Himself as the authority for what His followers teach. But here, as in other cases, we find in it a fulness and magnificence which His followers never quite reproduced in teaching, and which they have never yet realised in fact.

IV. And yet that is scarcely true, as appears when we consider the other ordinance which the early followers of Christ observed, namely, the Lord's Supper, and the meaning it conveyed to them. This ordinance was frequently by synecdoche spoken of as the Breaking of Bread (Acts ii. 42, 46, xx. 7; 1 Cor. x. 16). Of its origin there is no need to speak. It was observed by Christ on the night of His betrayal. From the first it was regarded by the Church as a permanent institution, and practised by them as such. But the question has been raised, had Christ this permanent rite in view, when, amid the tension of that solemn hour, He rose, gathered up the meaning of His whole life into a symbolic act so eloquent and yet so simple, and offered Himself, even in His death, to His

disciples as the very life of their lives? The Acts of the Apostles, where we see the custom of the Church from the very first, shows that the disciples thought so. The terms of the institution in Luke (xxii. 19) and Paul (1 Cor. xi. 23–26) state that it was so. But appeal to Luke is challenged. There is confusion in the text at this point, and the words are viewed with great suspicion. Set him aside and no evangelist says that such was Christ's intention. The words of Christ, as Matthew and Mark give them, are silent on this point. John does not mention the Supper explicitly at all. What is the meaning of this silence? Is it a dumb protest against the habit of the Church and the statement of Paul? It is too much to ask us to believe that. The Synoptists give the circumstances of the Feast with great detail. The custom, as we have seen, sprang up at once. All critics are agreed that the custom was in John's mind, when he introduced the great discourse of chap. vi. into his Gospel as a helpful lesson on its meaning. Paul's words are precise, that he "received of the Lord"—whatever meaning be attached to that, it conveys that here he is not giving a view of his own, but something he threw back on Christ's authority —"that which He delivered"; and his closing comment, "as often as ye eat this bread," etc. (ver. 26), is meaningless apart from repetition. If, in the face of all this, the evangelists meant to discredit the practice, and to indicate that it had really no warrant from Christ, more than silence was needed. That of itself could not discredit a rite so singular and original, at once adopted and sacredly cherished in memory of Christ; nor can it shake our confidence in a solemn, explicit report, from the pen of the earliest writer on the subject, that the practice had its origin in Christ's own request: "This do in remembrance of Me" (1 Cor. xi. 24, 25).

We have seen already the light cast by the ordinance

on the meaning of Christ's death for us. But its symbolism is not exhausted thereby. If baptism represents union, the Lord's Supper represents communion. The symbolism of the rite is eating and drinking. The material is food. It represents Christ's supply for the life of the souls He had quickened. For it is very necessary to bear in mind Dale's significant remark, that in the sacraments we do not offer something to God; we receive something from Him.[1] The something that is received in the Supper is Christ. "Take, eat; this is My body . . . drink ye all of it, for this is My blood of the covenant, which is shed for many unto the remission of sins" (Matt. xxvi. 26–28). Of course, He meant nothing so gross, as that by some mysterious transformation the disciples were to eat His physical flesh, and drink His physical blood. He knew that, even if that could be done, it could serve no purpose for their spiritual nourishment. Spiritual life is not nourished through the organs of physical digestion (cf. Mark vii. 18 ff.; Matt. xv. 16 ff.). What He says in the great discourse in John (chap. vi.) is the conclusive proof to the contrary. It is entirely occupied with the secrets of soul-nourishment; and just as in the discourse on soul-cleansing (chap. iii.), He had to disabuse the mind of Nicodemus of all materialistic notions, He had to do the same here. A crass materialism asserted itself. They asked, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" They could not understand the figure He used, and so He had to explain it: "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which abideth into eternal life, which the Son of man shall give unto you; for Him the Father, even God, hath sealed" (ver. 27). . . . "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst" (ver. 35). . . . "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing" (ver. 63). He lifts the whole out of the

[1] *Life*, p. 359.

realm of figure and symbol, and touches the realities lying behind, which alone can feed the soul, and which are received by faith into the heart, namely, Himself and the great redemption in Him.

Nothing that Paul says in the least conflicts with this. As in reference to baptism, so on this subject, he speaks to men on the assumption, that in the observance of the rite they are dealing with the reality, not with the mere symbols in which the reality is represented (1 Cor. xi. 27 ff.). He understands thoroughly Christ's principle as to mere food (1 Cor. vi. 13). And at 1 Cor. x. 14 ff. he states clearly what the observance of this ordinance means. It means communion, fellowship with Christ. More than keen dialectic on religious topics, or even the kindly concourse of man with man, is needed to nourish the spiritual life. It wants direct personal intercourse with the living Christ. And this is the clue to what was meant by Christ and understood by His followers, when He said, "this do in remembrance of Me." In view of Christ's own statements as to His resurrection, His return, His being always with them, that cannot mean that this was the provision by which He, the loved friend of bygone days, would continue to live after His decease. It was not needed to secure for Him an immortal memory, by which He might escape oblivion, the fate of the dead. As grasped by Paul, it was Christ's provision, by which the disciples would have preserved fresh before their minds the fact of the spiritual presence of their absent but Living Lord, and also it would keep their thought of Him constantly associated with the never-to-be-forgotten fact, that it was by His death He purchased their allegiance and their love. Paul knew how mechanical and deadly may become loyalty to a mere memory. And it is not that he offers as supreme dynamic for Christian service, but loyalty to Him who died for us and rose again (2 Cor. v. 14, 15). From experience

he knew how this consciousness of the Risen Living Lord, present in the world, working with and through His followers, watching with delighted eye every effort in His service, could call forth lively delight in every task, and responsive desire to share in all His experiences for and in and with His people (1 Cor. iii. 9; 2 Cor. vi. 1). And such fellowship was a very real privilege to Paul. It was sharing Christ's sufferings in the sufferings of His faithful followers, be these persecutions demanding warm, prayerful sympathy (Phil. ii. 1, 2), or privations needing a helping hand (2 Cor. viii. 4). It was no less sharing His triumphs and His glory (Rom. viii. 17; 2 Cor. i. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 11–13). It was appropriation to the full of all Christ meant, when He said, "he that receiveth you, receiveth Me" (Matt. x. 40 ff.; Luke x. 16; John xiii. 20), and "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me" (Matt. xxv. 40). In that rich enjoyment of fellowship, partnership, with Christ is the strongest, most wholesome food for human souls.

John appreciated this (cf. John iv. 32, 34). There is a hint of it, which is expanded later, in the message of the Risen Lord to the Laodicean Church: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (Rev. iii. 20). That is the very counterpart of the explanation Christ gave to Judas of how He would manifest Himself to His disciples, when manifestation to the world ceased: "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John xiv. 23). And fellowship is as truly the object of the Intercessory Prayer as union. As in the teaching of Paul, it is realised according to John in the effort after personal holiness and in the active service of Christ. To further the widespread enjoyment of this great privilege was John's motive in writing

his Epistle. It stands stated there on its very forefront (1 John i. 1–7). In the first instance, it seems as if the fellowship he meant were fellowship between fellow-Christians. And it is so. The whole subsequent strain of the Epistle aims at binding Christian brethren more closely together in the bonds of love, and that in well marked contrast to the associations of the world. But John has scarcely struck the opening chord, when the deep basal note proclaims the fact, that all real fellowship among believers finds its origin in fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ (i. 3). It is by a thorough common knowledge of God, revealed in Christ as Spirit, Light, Love, a knowledge not simply of the head but of the heart, not only of the ear but of experience, that men advance into the full delight and matchless helpfulness of fellowship with God, and there find that with God it is all giving, with them all receiving (1 John v. 18–20; cf. John iii. 27); and so they can, as Paul says, work out their own salvation, for it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Phil. ii. 12, 13).

This fellowship with one another on the basis of fellowship with Christ, Paul found suggested in the sacraments of the Old Testament and reproduced in the Supper (1 Cor. x. 3, 4; cf. ver. 17). And in this he is reading aright the ordinance instituted by Christ. What other purpose could our Lord have had in view in selecting as His memorial a social meal, the elements of which represented Himself? It stands on the very face of it. Fellowship with Him lies at the root of all. But men bound to Him are a band of brothers, fed on a common meal, at a Father's table, members of the great kingdom, not of this world, which He came to found, and in which they can enjoy the salvation He has realised. The bond is the bond of the Spirit, through whom the Risen and Exalted Lord

maintains His operations among His people on earth, while He acts for them in the fulness of His power in heaven. And the benediction of this community is "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all" (2 Cor. xiii. 14).

CHAPTER IX

MAN'S EXPECTED RESPONSE—FAITH

Faith—Christ's Teaching—Faith a Term in current Use—How understood — Misconceptions of His Day — God its ultimate Object —Passages illustrative of this—The Justification of Christ's Call for Faith in His Message and in Himself—Form the Call to Faith takes in Conformity with this—The Expression of this in Terms of Discipleship—This Combination justified by the Risen Lord—How presented in John's Gospel—Criticism of Wendt—Christ's Anxiety to develop Faith—Summary.

Apostolic Teaching—(*a*) The Acts—(*b*) James, Meaning of his Strictures —Where Paul agrees with him—(*c*) Paul, his Polemic—Faith alone wanted because of Function to be performed—Its Object is the Crucified and Risen Christ—It is a Faculty kept in constant Exercise—It plays a practical Rôle—Relation of Paul's View to Christ's —(*d*) Peter's View—(*e*) Faith in Hebrews—(*f*) John dwells chiefly on the Object of Faith.—General Comparison with Christ—Illustrated by a Diagram.

Two cognate Questions—(1) Are Christ and His Apostles at one as to God's Activity and the Exercise of Faith in Salvation?—Paul —Christ in John's Gospel—(2) What is the proper Object of Justification?—It is the Individual—The Function for Faith of the Community.

WE have considered the Ideal, the Person, and the Work of Christ, Incarnate and Exalted. These all play their part in His accomplishment of His divine mission, the salvation of mankind. Through them we have seen a union effected from the divine side with humanity, in virtue of which a regenerative transformation of humanity is practicable. The one thing still requisite to the realisation of this is man's response to this divine approach, his voluntary entry into and continuance in this union. And by common consent the step he must take to effect

this is Faith. This is what remains for us to consider, in order to complete our study of the outstanding features of Christ's teaching, and of the shape these took in the hands of His disciples.

As there is room for difference of opinion as to what exactly faith meant on the lips of Christ, it will be well to commence in this instance with Christ's own teaching. Thus we shall see from the first with what we must correlate the teaching of His followers. And it may be noted at the outset that faith appears in the vocabulary of Christ as a well understood term, which He does not think it necessary to explain. From that, Johannes Weiss, in his valuable monograph, *Die Nachfolge Christi*, draws the very just inference, that we must look for its significance in the common source of ideas familiar at once to Jesus and His everyday associates, namely, Old Testament usage. Faith, for Christ Himself and for those who heard Him, meant, in the first instance, what it meant to a really devout Jew. And here as in all other subjects which involve both the intellectual and the moral, for the Jew the moral is primary. Faith is for him a matter of the heart and will rather than of the head. Faith, in the sense of belief, intellectual assent, credit, acceptance of something as truth, is quite subordinate to the idea of trust, confidence, reliance reposed, by a deliberate act of will, where some glad fact or commanding personality has mastered the respect and allegiance of the heart. Faith is the activity of the soul, by which men pierce the veil of the unseen and lay hold upon the Eternal. From the Old Testament [1] we get that conception of faith in virtue of which it is variously described as a "spiritual principle planted in the soul, apprehending things above reason, and raising us up to conceive of all things as God hath discovered them" (Sibbes); "the perception of the opera-

[1] See Dillmann, *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, p. 416, cf. p. 432.

tion of God which calls up in us a new mode of thinking, feeling, and willing, and lets us see the world in which we live in a new light" (Herrmann), or "the sixth sense" (Watson). But it is more. It is all of these in exercise, in living grasp upon God and the promises of God. That is the true type of Old Testament faith, "without which," as Dillmann says, "no genuine religion is possible." And the reason for that is that faith is the true childlike attitude; and that is the right relation of a soul to God.

So Christ understood it. But He found that among many of the Jews, faith, as thus understood, had lost its significance. It had succumbed to one of its constant dangers. Its prime importance for the religious life had become obscured; and it had been supplanted by one of its own dependents. Faith always carries with it a call to a type of character to be attained and maintained by its own constant exercise, along the lines of delighted spontaneous obedience to the will of the trusted heavenly Father. But missing this connection between faith and obedience, and mistaking the true nature of both, the man deemed religious in Christ's day conceived of his relation to God as resting on the basis of formal attention to stereotyped lines of moral and religious observance. Christ's teaching was designed to correct this. It shows a steady effort to restore the lost conception, and reawaken the childlike confidence, or faith, in God. God is ultimately the Object to whom He directs the faith of men. His method, it is true, is to invite confidence, first, in the Good News He brings, and then in Himself as the embodiment of the Good News. But it is always on the tacit assumption, which He ultimately makes explicit, that in dealing with Him men are dealing with God. He restores confidence in God by first awakening faith in Himself, and then revealing God in Himself. This will become plainer as we proceed.

An instructive passage in reference to this is that section of the Sermon on the Mount, in which He brings out the paramount importance of righteousness (Matt. vi. 19–34). What is the basis of His strong dissuasive there from all worldly anxiety? It is the absolute reliability of God. He is a Father, who can be entirely depended upon. He is the one who is worthy of trust. Still more impressive is the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke xv. 11–32).[1] In the two preceding parables, the parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin, Christ depicts the efforts of God to recover the lost. And that must be borne in mind in considering the third parable. It is one of a series, and is not complete in itself. The first two bring out what there is nothing to embody in the third, namely, the active efforts made to recover the lost; and that should prevent any misconception arising from the comparative inaction of the father, as if it meant that for man's salvation nothing was needed on God's part, no effort, no sacrifice, nothing but man's penitent return. To think so is to ignore the exertions of the Shepherd and the Woman. But in the parable of the Prodigal, Christ gives us man's part, represented now by no inert coin, or senseless sheep, but by a human being. And what is the very essence of it, as a picture of all that is required in a man, for his return to a place in God's family? Is it not what took place in the desolate heart away among the herd of swine —a return to faith in his father? It is the abandonment of the attitude of self-assertive independence, which trusted its own intelligence and strength as a better guarantee for its well-being than the wise provisions of fatherly love, and the return to the childlike attitude under the restored conviction of the unshaken constancy of the father's love. Thus, in both of these passages without saying faith Jesus

[1] For a very acute criticism of Wendt's view of the parable, see Hilgenfeld, *Zeitschrift für Wissenschaftlichen Theologie*, xxxvii. 503 f.

has depicted the very thing, and that as the essential to make a life well-pleasing to God.

He puts the matter quite explicitly in another connection, and that in a passage which is one of a group in which, with slight variations due to change of time and circumstance, He repeatedly refers to the power of faith. In this case it is introduced by Peter's expression of astonishment at the speedy decay of the fig-tree which Christ had cursed (Mark xi. 20 ff.). Christ's reply is, "Have faith in God." What is the meaning of that reply? Is it not the revelation to His disciples of the secret principle of His own life, the wellspring of His own power? Delighting in the thought of God as His Father, He, as a Son, cherished the spirit of boundless confidence in that Father, and was sure of His aid in any transaction which He regarded as likely to contribute to the better understanding, or to the success, of the cause which He represented.[1] He gave an exhibition in Himself of what the right relation of a soul to God should be. And, that the most surprising deeds of His life might become intelligible to men, He invited them to cherish toward God the same spirit as His own, when they would acquire a similar power to what He possessed Himself. "All things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark ix. 23). And this is the logic of His miracles. In many instances they depended on a measure of faith in the individuals benefited by them (Matt. ix. 2, 28, 29), and were intended to engender a still deeper faith. Where the faith was lacking, Jesus had no freedom to work (Mark vi. 5, 6). But where the faith existed and miracles would serve the great end of His mission, He used His power. By doing so, He appealed to the common convictions of the day. In the light of His own personal character and of the character

[1] For a very interesting study of the place of faith in Christ's own life, see Haussleiter's monograph, *Der Glaube Jesu Christi und der Christliche Glaube.*

of the miracles He performed, He was well aware that men would feel that in Him God had drawn near to them. For the truth of this, Peter's cry at the miraculous draught of fishes, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke v. 4–11), speaks volumes, and so does the formal tribute of Nicodemus (John iii. 2). And Christ's object in performing miracles was not simply to arrest attention or to alleviate clamant need, but, by showing the mighty forces within the reach of faith, to develop in others that unhesitating faith in God which He Himself possessed in His heavenly Father.[1]

In view of this there is something startling, until it is understood, in the way in which Jesus demands a like faith, first in His message, and then in Himself. The explanation, of course, is found in what we have already seen was a feature of His teaching, its progressive character commencing with the kingdom and gradually concentrating upon Himself, when He is found to be "God manifest in the flesh." Similarly, His earliest calls for faith began far away. "The time is fulfilled; the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, and believe the good news" (Mark i. 15). That is little more than a repetition of the call given by John the Baptist. If it meant more on the lips of Jesus than it did on the lips of John, that was due to the testimony which John himself had borne to Jesus. But it is necessary to notice that, even in this form, the essential nature and the ultimate object of faith are alike prominent. The good news to be believed is the good news of the near advent of God's kingdom. The emphasis is on the fact that this coming kingdom is that in which God is supreme. The faith, too, is a faith which has its roots in a moral revolution, called repentance. That word itself, as well as the Greek which it translates, means, as is well known, afterthought or reconsideration. But when the subjects,

[1] See *Expository Times*, xi. 194 ff., and article noticed there.

on which this reconsideration is to be expended, are taken into account, it becomes apparent that this is not simply a mental review of the situation. It means the recognition, with sorrow and shame, of the wickedness and the hopelessness of the existing relations; but over against that, preventing a resultant despair, it sets the welcome tidings of God's coming reconstitution of humanity, and it issues in a resolve to venture all upon that, make what Romanes calls "the experiment of faith."[1] As Chapuis puts it, "Faith betrays a need, an aching void; it is begotten of our misery, and presupposes repentance."[2]

A similar view of faith, with many sidelights on its counterfeits, is presented in the parable of the Sower (Matt. xiii. 1–23 and parallels). The seed sown is the word of the kingdom. The various soils and their reception of the seed represent various attitudes which wish to pass for faith. But in the explanation only that is approved as genuine which is attentive, intelligent, unfettered, persistent, fruitful. Thus it is evident that faith involves credence of a message, a message about God and His kingdom; but it involves also a far-reaching moral activity as an equally essential part of it.

But from news of God's kingdom Jesus passes, by an almost imperceptible transition, to Himself, as the object of faith. At first sight the fact of a transition like this almost suggests that it involves a change in the nature of the faith demanded. But it is only necessary to recall, what we have just seen, that the ultimate object of faith is always God, that is to say, a personal object, in order to dispel that impression. Christ formulates the call to faith in Himself in various terms: "follow Me"; "come unto Me"; "learn of Me." But the most helpful thing to an under-

[1] *Thoughts on Religion*, p. 167.

[2] *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, v. 320. The whole article, "Der Glaube an Christus," is most valuable.

standing of faith in this second stage will be to observe it, where Christ recognised it. On two occasions it appeared in such strength that it surprised Him, in the appeals, namely, of the Roman centurion and of the Syrophenician woman. In the former case it expressed itself in this way: "I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof; but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." Now this is no nicely balanced critical judgment of the nature of Christ. But the centurion was convinced of Christ's integrity, and therefore of His power to heal. His heart thrilled in response to Christ's sympathy with suffering. He saw at once that such power as His was more than human, and could not be fettered by limitations of space or time. Christ was absolute master here, just as he himself was in a limited way in his own sphere. And so with magnificent recklessness he put his servant unconditionally in Christ's hands. That confidence in Christ is pure faith (Matt. viii. 5–13). The Syrophenician woman achieved an even greater triumph. Pagan as she was, she saw so far into the secrets of Christ's heart, that she was sure a love dwelt there that no distinctions of race or creed could check. She would not believe her ears when Jesus seemed to falsify her judgment of Him. And that quick penetration, by which one soul pierces and grasps the character of another, and that self-abandonment with which it cleaves to it, are of the essence of faith (Matt. xv. 21–28). In a third case Christ recognises the faith which He demands, where its exercise did not secure the removal of any external trouble, but the pardon of a sin-sick soul. This is His verdict on the spiritual attitude of the woman who washed His feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. But what did she believe? That in coming to

Jesus she was coming to God's Son, who would grant her God's pardon for her sins? No; but this. Jesus was to her the revelation of the beauty of holiness. The impress of His character awakened in her a loathing of her past, a crave for a new life, and somehow the hope that this was still within her reach. From touch with Him she conceived a thought of God, such as the law had never given her. If such pity, love, and helpfulness as she imagined dwelt in the heart of Jesus, where also dwelt such antagonism to sin, she dared to think that God's heart might be like that, not "coldly sublime, intolerably just."[1] So she determined to put it to the severest test possible, and accordingly approached Jesus, and offered Him her homage in the very presence of the frowning representatives of the law. He stood the test. He had no repulse for her, but tender, encouraging tones. Her faith grew boundless, and when He said she was forgiven, she knew it was God's truth. Through Jesus she reached God, and probably also, in a sense she hardly fully understood, in Jesus Himself found God (Luke vii. 37–50). In each of these cases the attitude which Christ recognises as faith is the absolute reliance upon Himself, the conviction of hearts that in Him they have found vital principles, and these the personal activities of the living God.

But the intimacy of the association with Christ, established by faith, is further explained in the call to discipleship. It is true that disciple is a term used with considerable laxity to describe different degrees of attachment to Christ. But what it means is determined by what Christ says with regard to it. Primarily it means one who receives His teaching. But when Christ's teaching is seen to issue in a call to a complete break with the past and the adoption of a new method of life, when He so enlarges its content as to include His own transcendent example even

[1] Myers, *St. Paul.*

in its crucial experiences, and when He refuses to recog nise anyone as worthy of the name of scholar of His, wh is not prepared to give up all for Him and identify himself body and soul, with His cause, then receiving His teaching becoming a disciple, acquires a significance that it possesse in no other connection. Discipleship in this case does no simply involve a discipline of the intellect, but is a surrende of the whole man to the Teacher. What the position may require is seen in the case of the disciples *par excellence*— the Twelve. They forsook all and followed Him. An that any aspirant to discipleship must be prepared for such constant attendance, if need be, is plain from the way in which Christ, while yearning for disciples, will encourage no false hopes, rides rough-shod over offers lacking in eithe deliberateness or thoroughness (Luke ix. 57–62), insists on men counting the cost, for association with Him mean sacrifice salted with fire, sharing His cup and His baptism (Luke xiv. 25–35; Mark ix. 49 f., x. 38 f.). At the same time, personal attendance on Him in His wanderings during His lifetime, or wholesale adoption of the itinerant life, wa never essential to most real and complete discipleship, as i evident from the case of the cured Gadarene demoniac, th nameless worker of miracles in His name, or the family a Bethany, where Mary found the one thing needful, the good part (Mark v. 18–20, ix. 38–40; Luke x. 38–42). It wa enough that men and women have the spirit ready for th complete surrender of even the dearest affections and lif itself, if these conflict with fidelity to Him, acquire Hi confidence in the sufficiency and supremacy of lowlines and gentleness in the conflict with trial, opposition, an hatred, adopt His example as the pattern to be fol lowed, His will as the law to be obeyed (Luke xiv. 26 Matt. xi. 28, 30). Add all this to what has already bee gathered as to the nature of faith, and the conception i complete. It involves the acceptance of Christ, in all th

activities and trials of His career, as the adequate and trustworthy specific for all the needs of mankind.

This combination of discipleship and faith, and the recognition of their inner unity, have the sanction of the Risen Lord. His commission to His apostles was to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things He had commanded" (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20); while of the response to be expected it is said, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved" (Mark xvi. 16). Discipleship is reached, therefore, when on hearing the Good News a man welcomes it, realises the blessed intimacy of relation with God, into which he may enter through Christ, and expresses in outward act the union, into which he has entered with Christ by faith, by accepting the rite, which, as we have seen, was instituted by Christ to symbolise the gracious provision on which that union rests. Discipleship in the fullest sense is the position held by one who has reached a full-orbed faith.

Alongside of this teaching found in the Synoptics must be placed the teaching of Christ in the Gospel of John. As was to be expected in a Gospel written with the avowed purpose of calling forth faith in the Son of God, faith itself received much prominence. And yet it is one of the lexical curiosities of this Gospel that the substantive πίστις, faith, never occurs. Only the verbal forms are used. These forms assume the two constructions, πιστεύειν with the dative, and with εἰς. Broadly the distinction is the same as in English between "believing a statement or a person," and "believing on or in a person."[1] And in the course of the Gospel the Saviour discriminates and makes perfectly plain what is the faith, which He requires as an adequate response to the mission on which He is come (John ii.

[1] Westcott, *Commentary on John* v. 24.

23–25, vi. 60 ff.). In view of his purpose, it is not surprising that John at once hastens to present that more advanced type of Christ's teaching, in which He offers Himself as the object of faith.

Wendt here again labours his thesis that it was for His teaching in the narrower sense that Christ really sought men's faith, and he states that "the faith required in it consists in nothing otherwise than in trustful and obedient recognition, reception, and following of the teaching which revealed God, showed the right, and was the means of salvation, and which forms His Messianic vocation."[1] And there are passages which, taken alone, might bear that construction. For instance, Wendt quotes John v. 24: "He that heareth My word, and believeth Him that sent Me," etc. And he seeks to strengthen his case by appeal to passages, where Christ insists on the practical test of professed love: "If ye love Me, keep My commandments" (John xiv. 15). But the very form of the former (John v. 24) calls into the foreground a fact which Christ continually reiterates and to which He constantly appeals in addressing men who profess to know God, namely, that He has come on a mission from God, enjoys God's attestation, as is to be seen from the type of message He delivers and from the works He does, and as such demands faith in Himself. That is the bearing of the words quoted, "heareth My word, and

[1] Wendt, *Teaching of Jesus*, ii. 331. In the section where Wendt seeks to establish this from the Synoptics (ii. 312 f.), there is an argument, which is positively ludicrous. We are solemnly told that "the difference between the conduct of Martha and Mary (Luke x. 38 ff.) is to be stated thus, that the former was busied with regard to the person of Jesus in external activity for His external welfare, but the latter devoted herself to His preaching with inner understanding of the true purpose of His life and work." True, but what bearing has that contrast on the proper object of faith? Does Wendt think that catering for the bodily wants of Jesus has even a distant resemblance to what men mean who insist that the Person of Jesus and not merely His teaching is the matter of supreme moment? They would regard Mary as their own representative, listening so eagerly to His teaching because it was His, and deriving its chief weight from the dignity of the Teacher, whose spirit is so truly discerned.

believeth Him that sent Me" (cf. ver. 36). Faith in Him who sent Jesus only bears sense here, if it means believing that Jesus was sent by God, was His Son, as He claimed to be, and was possessed of the powers which He claimed. It is but another way of saying, what He said in reply to a question: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent" (vi. 29). As for the call to obedience to His will as a proof of love, it has no direct bearing on the subject. And its indirect evidence is in favour of the idea, that the paramount object of faith is His own sublime Person. Most instructive as to the object of faith is the suggestive verse (xiv. 1). Be the sense the familiar "ye believe in God, believe also in Me," or two imperatives, "believe in God, and believe in Me," nothing could be more impressive than the placing of faith in Himself on the identical footing with faith in God. And when the substance of the following chapters, which is the justification of this demand, is taken into account, consisting, as it does, of the explanation of the vital relationship which He was to maintain after His departure with those who did believe in Him, the true nature of the faith which alone will satisfy stands out in vivid characters as a living, lasting grip of soul with soul—"abide in Me, and I in you" (xv. 4) —not merely a response to a truth, no matter how impressive or how profound.

In this Gospel Jesus does undoubtedly attach great importance to His teaching. It is one of the potent forces He uses to call faith into existence. Similarly He uses miracle and accords an evidential value to it, although it is only as a concession to the dulness of His contemporaries. He welcomes, where He finds it, anything that possesses even the germs of faith. But He is never content, whether in the general public or within the narrow circle of those who were most closely attached to Him, with anything that stopped short of that pure, spiritual insight which

only required a hint of the unseen and eternal to penetrate to its grandest secrets (John xx. 8). He always sets to work on the ruder types to develop them to something higher. The case of Nicodemus makes this very clear (iii. 1–15). When he comes, professing a certain measure of respect in view of the outward manifestations of divine approval, Christ sets these significantly aside as not the material by which "the master of Israel" should judge. If he condescends to this, he will have no capacity of faith, when heavenly things are revealed. Christ's principle is, "to whom much is given, of him much shall be required." At a different level stands the blind man at the pool of Siloam (chap. ix.), but the method is the same. This man, at the outset, had simply faith enough to act on the advice of a kindly stranger, and go wash in the pool of Siloam. The cure which followed convinced him of the moral integrity, religious character, and prophetic position of his friend, and he was prepared to contend for that at all costs. When Jesus meets him again, He probes his faith, and finds that as yet it reaches no higher than that. But at that level it is so strong as to be fit to rise higher, and He lets him into the secret of His own dignity, and at once receives his adoring worship. That is true faith, so inspired with confidence in Christ as constantly to respond to His growing revelation. The case of Martha is equally instructive (xi. 20 ff.). When Jesus came to Bethany, He was met with half-reproachful words: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Christ's reply is, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha answers with a pious platitude: "I know he shall rise again at the last day." But Jesus does not deal in platitudes, and for those who know Him, spiritual truths should be realities. And He flashes on Martha the staggering, but stimulating announcement: "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live; and

he that liveth and believeth on Me shall never die. Believest thou this?" And a look of surprised intelligence came into the eyes of Martha, as if new meaning had streamed into an old conviction, and she answered, "Yea, Lord, I have believed that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, even He that cometh into the world." And she means, "I believed that before in a way; but it means something practical to me now." A few minutes' interval sufficed to show that it did not even yet mean all that it might. But the home thrusts of Jesus showed her, as they show us, that faith in Him is personal and practical, regarding Him as guarantee of all. The treatment of Thomas brings out the same truth. It teaches us, that faith has not reached its acme, until it can dispense with outward evidence, grasp the inherent harmonies of the moral and spiritual domain, and recognise at once and appropriate their necessary results. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John xx. 24–29).

Faith, then, according to Jesus, whether we turn to find His mind on it to the Synoptics or to the Gospel of John, is the one essential in the response by man to God's overtures and exertions in order to His achieving His desired result with him. Given that, though but as a grain of mustard seed, in a heart willing to use it, and He can make anything of a man. It so attaches a man to Him that it opens the possibility of everything else. The call for it lies at the root of every other demand, be it to repent, convert, or obey. And faith is so essential and so comprehensive, because the believing heart is the humble, receptive, renewed heart of a child.

When we pass to the teaching of the apostles, a book of the records of the spread of the gospel like the Acts naturally throws much light on the response which was expected for the message they bore. The addresses there culminate in an appeal for repentance in view of the mercy

and forbearance of God who, even after the inconceivable wickedness of the rejection of His proffered Messiah, still waits to be gracious. This repentance, however, only marked what was to be the initial stage of the new attitude of those who were aroused by the apostles' preaching. And when the writer comes to speak of those who have repented, that is not the phrase he employs. He calls them those who believed. The latter term covers the former, and describes a permanent spiritual attitude. This believing, faith, is for the apostles themselves the secret of their power (Acts iii. 16). It includes the reception of the message delivered by the apostles as true, and may go no further than that, fall short of any spiritual reform, as in the case of Simon Magus (Acts viii. 13). But in its full form, it shows itself in a radical change of life (Acts ii. 37 ff.), an identification of oneself with Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, an emptying of the heart of evil that leaves it ready for the filling with the Holy Spirit, and a spontaneous activity, free from all thought of self, in the service of the Christ's cause and of the Brethren (Acts iv. 32 ff.). Its object is Christ (Acts xvi. 31), the Christ whom God hath raised from the dead, or the name of Christ (Acts iii. 16, x. 43), where "name," as so often in language influenced by Hebrew methods of thought and expression, means all that Christ stands for, Christ, with the saving power that is His in virtue of what He is, has done, and has suffered for men. Throughout the book this faith is the comprehensive term for the different spiritual experiences involved in a response to the gospel appeal, and that because it lies at the root of them all.

Looking at the separate writers, we are not surprised to find such a many-sided subject variously handled. In the very first work, the Epistle of James, as was noted in the first chapter, the nature of faith had to be asserted against a very common perversion. Jesus, when He began His

ministry, had to eject the prevailing erroneous conception of what constituted the true relationship to God, and restore faith to its rightful dominant position. And James fully understood that. Faith is for him the feature in a life that reduces all other distinctions to insignificance, and gives a man his true rank as in God's sight (ii. 5). It is the secret of acceptability with God and of stability of character (i. 3–8). Its object is the Lord Jesus Christ, "the Glory,"[1] *i.e.* the visible manifestation of God (ii. 1). But he found that, with the customary human proneness to error, among the early Jewish Christians a counterfeit, void of all moral or spiritual content, without vital force, a mere assent of the intellect, was treated as the faith which Christ demanded, and with vigour and thoroughness, once for all, James pulverised that sham (ii. 14–26). And the faith that sets men right with God is seen to be a spiritual energy that develops a life and character that corresponds to itself, and operates in active practice of holy graces.[2] It is the faith that saved the penitent that stood weeping at Christ's feet, and which immediately developed much love (Luke vii. 47–50).

In Thessalonica Paul had to attack an error of practically the same kind as that assailed in his Epistle by James. And in 1 Corinthians he shows that he knows a faith in marked contrast with genuine faith (xiii. 7, 13) as profitless as that which James spurns (1 Cor. xiii. 2). And where he meets it, he assails it with the same demand for practical Christian activity in obedience to God's will. The

[1] So Bengel, *in loco.*; cf. Warfield in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "Faith."

[2] It is a failure to observe the point of the analogy in Jas. ii. 26, that permits writers to say that the author represents works as the soul of faith (cf. H. J. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 330; the whole section reads like so much solemn trifling). The figure is not intended to offer, in the relation of body to soul in their union, a parallel to the relation of faith to works. The point of comparison is the effect of severance in each case, namely, death; for works without faith are just as dead as faith without works.

idea of conflict between Paul and James is based on a mistake as to the relative order of their writings.[1]

But from Jewish-Christian centres, another perversion of the truth, striking at the very roots of Christ's teaching, was assiduously propagated in the wake of Paul's missions to the Gentiles. It was nothing else than the attempt to transplant to Christian soil that radical misconception of the true relationship of man to God, which had smothered the religious life of Judaism, and which Jesus Himself had had to combat and eradicate. As it now appeared, it was the attempt to reduce faith in Jesus Christ for salvation to a mere adjunct to the observance of Jewish ritual, while these ordinances were represented as of paramount importance. In his polemic against this, Paul's temperament led him to use no measured terms in his insistence on the futility, for this purpose, of works of the law in any form, and writing to men who were perfectly familiar with his uncompromising hostility to sin and demand for holiness, he was not careful in this connection to maintain the permanent value of obedience to the law. His object is to show the peerless place and power of faith. And he meets attempts to belittle it by a thoroughgoing analysis of the spiritual experience by which a man attains to the position of a son of God. He works out the meaning of the picture which Christ gave in His sketch of the returning prodigal. Rom. i.–viii. and Galatians are little else than commentaries on Luke xv. For in them Paul shows how far, to begin with, man is from the filial state of heart. In the colossal framework of a depravity which includes all branches of the race, he pillories the sin of each individual. He knows the consternation of conscience which his trenchant

[1] See Mayor's capital summary in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "James." Sanday and Headlam's account of the relation of James and Paul is different. They assume that James's Epistle is directed against a perverted construction that had been put, wittingly or unwittingly, upon Paul's teaching (*Romans*, p. 102 ff.).

exposure is bound to bring, and the need which it will at once reveal. And then to the anxious heart he presents God's propitiation in Christ, simply awaiting man's reception. Let faith accept that, and men are right again with God, have peace with Him (Rom. v. 1). In Romans he justifies his contention by an appeal to Abraham's case (chap. iv.). In Galatians he brings matters to an issue by the pointed question, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (iii. 2). The reply is a foregone conclusion. And he speaks of the Spirit and the way in which He is received as decisive, because the gift of the Spirit, the indwelling Spirit of Jesus Christ, is God's seal to sonship (Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 9–17; 2 Cor. i. 21, 22), man's proper relationship to God, to a return to which Christ's work paves the way for penitent hearts. A man's restoral to that filial relationship is his justification by God. Justification and adoption, righteousness and sonship, are two sides of the same thing. The difference is between the form and the matter of the one gracious act of God. And it is easy to see why, so far as man is concerned, faith, and faith alone, can and does, as these Galatians knew, avail as response to that gracious treatment, and place him in that position. It is because faith, loving trustfulness in a father, is the only proper attitude for a child. And so what else but faith can put a man in that position? A man who executes orders to the letter may be but a splendid slave. A son is a man who uses his liberty to please the father, whom he trusts, and who trusts him. Works, therefore, or the spirit that rests in them, no matter how carefully they be performed, can never be the substitute for that joyous, childlike trust which God desires, and which, when found, is the guarantee of a life of constant delighted effort to harmonise with His will. Given that trust, God counts it to a man for righteousness (Rom. iv. 3), *i.e.* not as a substitute for it, but as the thing

itself in germ, the attitude of heart and will, which will inevitably express itself in acts which please Him. Thus, from the relationship which from man's side faith re-establishes, we get at Paul's reason for maintaining its sole sufficiency.

The object of faith with Paul is the Lord Jesus Christ. But it is this Lord invested with all the potencies which are His in virtue of His death and resurrection (1 Thess. iv. 14; 1 Cor. ii. 2; Rom. viii. 34). And the significance for faith of these events receives a prominence in Paul's teaching, which they receive nowhere else. The reason why this should be so, in contrast with our Lord's own teaching, has already been discussed in connection with the events themselves, and was seen to lie in the impossibility of His explaining their full significance to men who, prior to their occurrence, simply did not comprehend His anticipatory references to them. The prominence which Paul gives them is only the legitimate consequence of the momentousness of the events themselves, and of the anticipations of them, so solemn and eager, which we have detected on Christ's part, in spite of the disappointing dulness at the time of His disciples. Paul has done, if we may so say, what Christ wished to do, and could not. He has rightly interpreted the mind of his Master, directed faith to the Living Christ, but the Christ who died, is risen, and lives again. Still, a faith in the Cross of Christ for salvation is only Paul's faith, when the value of the Cross is seen to be entirely due to the fact that it was Christ's. It is the Person who gives value to the experiences, not the Work which gives value to the Person. Indeed, I question if Paul could think of the Work apart from the Person. They were so wedded together in his thought that he refused to think of them apart, and felt that he should correct himself, if he seemed to suggest it (1 Cor. ii. 2).

This faith in Christ, through whom righteousness—the

right relationship with God—is mediated, is for Paul a habit, a permanent attitude of receptiveness for the power which the living Christ wields in our natures. It is the opening of the individual heart (Rom. x. 10) for the accomplishment in it of that union with God, which Christ achieved for human nature from the divine side in His own Person. And Paul's account of his own experience of it, and his call to men to enter into it, are like a reproduction by an apt scholar of Christ's far-reaching words about discipleship, read in the light of those profound statements of the secrets of spiritual vitality, preserved for us in the Gospel of John. He meets men with a call for Christ, like the "come unto Me"; "take up the cross, and follow Me"; "abide in Me." He says, "Be ye followers (imitators) of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. xi. 1; cf. iv. 16; Phil. iii. 17). There imitation means nothing external, but assimilation based on the appropriation of the righteousness in Christ (Phil. iii. 7–17). That passage (Phil. iii. 7–17), thick with the throbbing of his ardent bosom and beating heart, tells the path men must take, and the pace they must make, if they will be followers together with Paul. And the possibility of such discipleship Paul had found out years before he wrote to Philippi; for he told the Galatians, and Peter before them, "I am crucified with Christ, yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me; and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 15–21). This believing reception of life, believing submission to the divine energy of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus with whom he is united, is the fundamental attitude to which the Christian attests himself as committed, when he receives the ordinance of baptism. As has been said already, when referring to this rite, Paul treats the men, who have been baptized, as men who were sincere in the observance of the rite, and for whom, therefore, what

it typified was a reality. Now baptism presupposes faith (Gal. iii. 24–27), which, apart from the rite, clings to Christ; and the purely passive attitude of the recipient in this rite, as also in the Lord's Supper, is a striking reminder to him that for the reception of all that the rite typifies he has nothing to do but to take it. That is the equivalent of the faith in the reality. It is a putting on Christ; but this is no passing initial step, but a permanent union whose results are only to be measured by the consequences which must follow (Rom. vi. 2 ff.).

The intensity of Paul's own sense of the reality of spiritual operations, the vividness of his sanctified imagination, the keenness of his enjoyment of the mystic union with Christ, in other words, the strength of his faith and the stress he laid upon it, sometimes so impose upon students of his teaching that they lose sight of the very practical shape faith also takes in his hands. With all his mysticism Paul never forgets that God carries through the salvation of men with a profound regard for the mental and moral nature with which He has equipped them. And if in response to faith mighty spiritual forces are to work within them, the true receptive attitude is attained on putting ourselves into the groove of God's will, where these can work. If the results detailed in Rom. vi. 2 f. are all the outcome of the life received by faith, they are achieved in men who put their members at the disposal of the Spirit of God, who "yield their members servants of righteousness unto holiness" (vi. 12 ff.). As he says in Phil. ii. 12, 13, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." As was pointed out in Chapter V., Paul's ethical interest is of the keenest, and his delight in the salvation he found in Christ is not least, because it brings him within the reach of holiness. And there is a warning at the close of Rom. xiv., "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (ver. 23), which

shows that the use made of faith carries a grave responsibility with it. There he is speaking of perplexities which often distress timid souls, and which they would like to escape by simply following the example or advice of other trusted, good men. As the context shows—and it has its bearing on his view of faith and effort—Paul attaches a very high value to example (xiv. 13, 21). But each man ultimately may only do what his own faith approves. He can only go as far as his own insight into the liberty which he possesses as a son of God will carry him. All beyond that, be it intrinsically right or wrong, for him is sin. Faith is for Paul a principle of obedience. The measure of what we receive is the measure of what we may do.

This whole view of faith is a most original and profound reproduction of Christ's own. The main difference is, that what Christ describes from the point of view of the one who invites faith, Paul describes out of the experience of one who accords it. What Christ had ascribed to it Paul attests, and invites others to verify his testimony. In external form there is the widest divergence. But if in Paul's teaching we have no parallel to those personal dealings and appreciations, which make the natural history of faith so vivid and charming in Christ's hands, if we have the dust of conflict and the ring of battle in place of the words which drop as the rain and distil as the dew, still we learn from him to appreciate more and more fully the perfect insight into the workings of the human spirit which Jesus possessed, when He staked all man's salvation on the response of faith—simple, whole-hearted faith. There is an echo, too, of the Master's manner. Those "foolish Galatians," deserting faith for the law, or Corinthians, who must be startled back to the importance of faith's cardinal facts by the disconcerting picture of the consequences, if Christ be not risen ("your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins, of all men most miserable"), remind us of those faint-

hearted disciples who forgot their faith amid the scare of the storm. The triumphs of a centurion or of a Syrophenician woman are eclipsed by the soaring aspirations of Paul's own confidence or his calm reflection at the end, "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day"[1] (2 Tim. i. 12).

The treatment of faith in 1 Peter is a reflection of that of Paul. There is not the same massive handling. There is no polemic. Faith is treated as a familiar principle among those to whom Peter writes, which he may take for granted. It is the substance of their spiritual life, for it is that which is really tested by a time of persecution (1 Pet. i. 7). It ultimately rests in God (1 Pet. i. 21), and is mediated through the Lord Jesus Christ by His redemptive work (1 Pet. i. 8, 9). It is a response to the message of Christ, in virtue of which they enter into a living union with Him, and receive therein the capacity for holy service. As symbolised in the acceptance of baptism, it is the confident appeal of a good conscience to a God who has forgiven (1 Pet. iii. 21). It is an abiding attitude of dependence upon the mighty forces by which God preserves from temptation. It is the secret of a present joy in an unseen Saviour (1 Pet. i. 8). And its end is completed salvation (1 Pet. i. 9). But these points appear incidentally, for Peter's main object is to cheer believers by the brilliant prospects which are in store for those who possess such faith, and to call out the buoyant expectancy and strenuous effort in which such faith should show itself.

[1] There is a use of the term "the faith" in the Pastoral Epistles as equivalent to the body of truth believed, and which is regarded as un-Pauline. And yet it is very questionable whether, in the light of the text quoted above (2 Tim. i. 12), and of that other, kindred to it (II. iv. 7), "I have kept the faith," the faith does not mean personal trust in Christ (cf. 1 Tim. i. 14, 16, 19, etc.). If this be so, the context in which it repeatedly occurs expresses just those safeguards which prevent it from being regarded as merely intellectual assent without moral content.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is also, like that of Peter which we have just considered, an effort to rally desponding, disconcerted Christians (xii. 12). But the real secret of their unrest is not so much their trials as the incidence of these trials concurrently with the clearly impending destruction of the old Jewish ritual in which they had been brought up, and whose supersession, and more than supersession, by the work of Christ, to which they had given adherence, they did not fully realise. This was having a deleterious effect on their loyalty to Christian truth. The object of the writer, therefore, is to rehabilitate their faith in Christ, to restore it to its old courage, patience, and hopefulness (Heb. x. 19–25, xii. 1–13). And to do this he does not simply go over the old ground. He assumes the elementary stages of Christian culture, the doctrines of "repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of baptisms and the laying on of hands,[1] of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment" (Heb. vi. 1, 2). By doing so he lets us see that for him faith lay at the very commencement of the Christian life, and bore the same nature as it did to the mind of Christ (cf. Mark i. 14, 15). What he does is in painstaking terms to set forth the strength of the testimony to the Christian gospel; the encouraging intimacy which God's Son had assumed with men, identifying Himself with them at all points; the superexcellency of Christ, the Author and Perfecter of faith, over every other high priest; the real value of the sacrifice which He offered, namely, Himself; the now ever-open door of access to God; and the guarantee of constant influence with God on men's behalf, which Christ's entrance and standing within the veil afforded. And as one point after another is established, he ever presses anew on the minds of those, in whom he

[1] The laying on of hands here is not that connected with ordination to office, but the more general and earlier practice frequently referred to in the Acts in connection with the gift of the Spirit and reception into the ranks of the believers.

seeks a genuine revival of their religious faith, the inspiring force of these enlarged views of Christ and His work. What he seeks to evoke is what he variously calls "full assurance" of faith or hope, "boldness," and so on; and he gathers it all up into one word, "faith." The richness of his conception of faith is seen in the epic of faith, which he gives in chap. xi. It is that spiritual faculty that gives body to things hoped for, that supplies the power of recognising things that are not seen (xi. 1). It is the capacity to lay hold of, and depend on, God and His promises in all circumstances, to find the interpretation of everything in Him, and in dependence on Him to pierce without fear the veil of the future. It is the feature which differentiates the character of all Israel's heroes, amid all their variety of temperament and task. What Christ said of the man who possessed it is true, "all things are possible to him that believeth." Having thus demonstrated what is the nature of the spirit which he wishes the great truths, which he has stated, to inspire once more in his readers, he finally draws attention away from all the noble examples he has given, and concentrates it upon Christ alone, at once its peerless example and worthiest object. The opening chapters of the book show us that in faith the author recognised the place of credence. But the essence of it and the object of it are, as Ménégoz well says in his most enlightening chapter on the subject, "the gift of the heart to God," or "the consecration of the soul to God."

We come to the writings of John. In the Apocalypse, the subject is not directly treated. And it is in the Gospel and first Epistle that faith receives prominence. He writes his Gospel to restate the proof that Jesus is, in the highest sense, the Son of God, for it is by faith in this that men have eternal life (xx. 31). His Epistle again is written to demonstrate the ground of Christian certainty to men that believe (1 John v. 13). He was led

to this by the appearance of some features of what was afterwards called Gnosticism. Two symptoms, which evidently appeared conjointly and were bound by some inner affinity which he does not specially discuss, evoked his displeasure, namely, the denial that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and a perfectionism which was radically antinomian. These considerations, together with features of his own natural temperament, determined his line of argument. And in his writings we really learn more about the object of faith than about the nature of it, and more about the Person of the Object and His supreme personal claim to confidence than about the work by which He benefits those whose faith He enlists. In regard to its nature, it seems fair to infer that he entertains those views of it which the utterances of Jesus, recorded by him, imply. But we are not left to inference. We gather that faith is such a receiving of Christ, as obtains the right to become children of God (John i. 11, 12). It is the recognition of Jesus as at once the Life and the Light of men, that is, the one who satisfies men's needs on both the spiritual and moral, and the intellectual sides of their nature. It is both the initial and the permanent response of the heart to God's approach by His Son and by His Spirit. It is "receiving," "walking," "abiding in" Christ in the closest of spiritual union.[1] When we gather up what he offers as proof, to men who believe, that they have eternal life, and what he states are the things by which they may know that they have eternal life, they resolve themselves into a record of the characteristic features of that life—a penitent confession of sin, a consequent assurance of forgiveness for Christ's sake, a steady, practical love of others who are children of God, a persistent resistance to wordliness and sin, and victory over them. But the secret

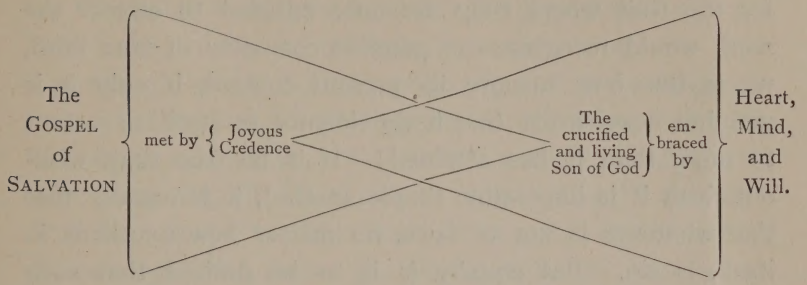
[1] As Erich Haupt says: "Es liegt in πιστεύειν in der That der Begriff der unio mystica" (*Commentary on 1 John* v. 1).

of it all is the triumphant faith, begotten in the heart by God's Spirit, when there is discovered to it the fact, that the Jesus, on whom it is asked to stake all, is the Son of God. It is the discovery, the knowledge, of this fact about Him that raises faith to its highest power and makes it irresistible (1 John v. 13; cf. vv. 4, 5).

It is evident from what has been said that the apostolic writers remain true to the attitude of Christ. The one demand they make upon men—but it is absolute—is faith, faith in Jesus Christ. That is the one requisite on man's part for the realisation in him of the object for which Christ lived and died and rose again. As we have seen, the apostles had to handle the subject under a great variety of aspects, and disentangle it from many perversions and misconceptions. Paul had to bring into prominence the work which gave the exalted Christ His claim on man's regard. John had to assert the dignity of His Person, to the full recognition of which faith must rise before it secures all that is to be found in Him. But none of them swerve from the essential conception of faith as a personal projection of the whole being of the believer into immediate and permanent union with Christ, a disposition at once of constant receptivity for divine energies and of constant activity in the use of them. When this is recognised, it is seen that faith ultimately includes all the activities of the spiritual life, is their great common ground, whether they appear as repentance, or obedience, or any one of the Christian graces. And its constant object is God in Christ.

It is, however, a power which grows and concentrates with exercise. Dr. John Ker, revered Professor of the United Presbyterian Divinity Hall in my student days, was fond of elucidating such subjects by diagrams. If I might follow his example here, I should illustrate, at once the progressive presentation of faith running continuously

through the teaching of Christ and of His apostles, and the anticipated progressive development of it in the experience of a believer by a diminuendo and a crescendo mark placed across each other.



The diminuendo mark represents the object of faith, the general message of goodwill which Jesus came to proclaim, stated at first in its widest and vaguest form, but steadily progressing in distinctness and precision, until it concentrates itself in Christ Himself. On the other hand, the crescendo mark represents the expansiveness and growing volume of faith starting from its germ in an attentive ear and a welcoming heart, gradually permeating every section of man's being, and bringing them all into the delighted, trustful fellowship with, and service of, Jesus Christ, the crucified and living Son of God.[1] Faith thus runs parallel to the progressive revelation of its proper object, which Jesus carried so far, and which His disciples, in loyalty to their Master's Spirit, carried to its complete expression. And true faith, the faith which Jesus desires to elicit, and which alone He regards as worthy of the name, is a confidence in Him that is ever ready to receive what He offers. It is steady responsiveness to His call. If it is but sincere, He is ready to accept it even in its most meagre and elementary form, "to recognise perfection in the piece imperfect"; but He expects that it will grow,

[1] . . . "Belief's fire, once in us,
Makes all else mere stuff to show itself."

and when matured and at the full, recognise in Him the Son of God, the Divine Crucified and Risen Saviour and Lord. Would that followers of Christ, of ripe personal experience, would recognise the truth of this, and not look for the fruit where they are only entitled to expect the seed, would recognise the genuine character of true faith, no matter how meagre its present content, if only it is genuine, never insist that it do violence to itself or assent to more than it has attained! If it be true that, without faith it is impossible to please God, it is equally true that whatever is not of faith, no matter how excellent in itself, is sin. But equally is it to be desired that such scanty, though genuine, faith should not insist that its own preliminary stage and content are all, its limited vision of Christ the whole, but aspire to the richness which matured experience of heart and mind and will delights to cherish and declare of the "unsearchable riches of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

We are not done with this matter of faith, however, until we have looked at two further points. The one is, Is there harmony between Christ and His apostles as to the relation between God's activity and the exercise of faith? and the other is, What is their teaching as to the proper object of justification, the initial blessing obtained by faith; is it the individual or the Church?

i. The former, which has been glanced at already in Chapter IV., presents itself, because of the prominence which it receives in Paul's hands in his discussion in Rom. ix.–xi. of the problem raised by the attitude of the Jews towards Christ. If the course of his previous argument in the Epistle is a clue to the workings of his mind here, what compelled Paul to face this question was the conviction wrought in him by the spectacle of divine grace, that all things work together for good to them that are called

according to God's purpose, for "whom He foreknew, He also foreordained," etc. (Rom. viii. 28–30). He at once, on the strength of that conviction and all that led up to it, clinches it with the magnificent challenge, in terms of the Christian's confidence against all objectors (viii. 29–39). But, having done so, he feels he must answer the feasible enough retort, if God's purposes and promises are so sure, what of Israel and their failure of salvation? His first reply is, that it is too hasty to speak of failure, for they "are not all Israel, which are of Israel" (ix. 6 f.). And he returns to that later (xi. 1–5). But then the petulant objection comes in, which seems to have something in it, that according to Paul's conception of Israel's action, God has no ground of complaint with those who do fail; they are the victims of fate (ix. 19). And Paul does not hesitate to insist in the strongest terms on the autocratic rights of God; but he refuses to admit man's right of challenge, or of self-vindication, on the basis of these rights. But that is not all his answer. Paul reminds men of what is God's will. It is that men should be saved, and saved by faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. The forces God uses to bring this about are neither those of physical omnipotence, nor of a mechanically logical invincibility. They are those suited to the equipment of a spiritual personality to whom God Himself has granted the power of moral judgment and spiritual discernment (x. 14, 15). They embody themselves in the gift of His grace, the gift of His Son and of His Spirit. And it was according to a favourite maxim of Paul (cf. Eph. ii. 6, 8), to preserve the graciousness of the salvation, that He made faith the sole medium of reception. Where faith was refused, the gift was forfeited. But the secret of the refusal was not fate, but moral antagonism to God's will, disobedience, self-will. Paul solves the problem of the position of the Jews by a magnificent *tour de force*. It

is temporary, to remove an obstacle, in their previous privilege, to the welfare of other nations; but it will give way to a glorious return in faith at full flood, and all Israel be saved. But what this has brought out is, that God is the great *prius*. The salvation of sinful men was an impossibility, the perfect life could not be reached, until He took it in hand. The whole process originates and eventuates through Him. It is the right of none. Towards any it is an exercise of grace. Where any fail of its blessing, it is, however, from no want of will on God's part, or want of means to meet the case. It is due to the moral perversity of a gainsaying and disobedient people. In this position Paul is simply stating, in the light of personal experience ("by the grace of God I am what I am") and of a wide observation of the process in others, the secret of personal salvation. Every saved man refers his salvation ultimately to God. The part played by his own faith in no way invalidates this, while the secret of rejection, being moral antipathy to the type of life in which faith inevitably issues, shows the moral fibre that is to be found in true faith itself.

In all this Paul is not solitary. It is not simply John's Epistle, with its uncompromising reference of all spiritual life and every activity of it to the new birth, which coincides. His position is that assumed by the Master Himself. There is perhaps no more valuable section of Wendt's treatise on the Teaching of Jesus than that in which he discusses this subject.[1] In it he discusses the hindrances to obtaining the blessing, the aid of divine grace, the exclusion of the unreceptive, both according to the Synoptics and according to John's Gospel. And he shows the entire harmony there is between the teaching in each set. In the

[1] Wendt, *Teaching of Jesus*, vol. ii. section third, chap. vii. 4. 11, pp. 74–121. Cf. H. J. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 193–200, and his expressive dictum, "Das Reich Gottes ist ebenso sehr Gabe wie Aufgabe."

Johannine source there are passages like those in the sixth chapter, where the teaching and drawing of the Father is represented as indispensable to a man's coming to Christ. "No man can come to Me except the Father which hath sent Me draw him" (vi. 44). Or, again, there are those other passages which describe the disciples as the Father's gift to His Son (vi. 37, 39, xvii. 2). But, as Wendt points out, these passages must not be looked at alone. They occur in contexts where Christ, so far from implying thereby a limit in the range of the divine grace, is deploring, exposing, and thereby trying to overcome, the moral and spiritual apathy and antagonism which turned a deaf ear to the Father's persuasive appeals.[1] And here, as with Paul, the lack of faith is found not in lack of grace or means of grace, but in unholy hearts that have no taste for the fruits of grace. They love darkness rather than the light, because their deeds are evil. Where faith does spring up, it is due to the graciousness of the divine approaches. It is the first inspiration of a newborn Child, begotten of God. The same truth is brought out in the attack on the Pharisees in the Synoptics (Matt. xxiii.), and rejection is seen to be the result of a conflict of wills: "I would . . . and ye would not" (Matt. xxiii. 37). How much there is for God to overcome, and how necessary it is that He should do it, was keenly felt by the apostles, and Jesus agrees. When the rich young ruler went away sorrowful, and Christ's yearning eyes followed him, He said, with a sigh of regret, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." "Who then can be saved?" asked the disciples. And Jesus admitted the justification they had for their question. "With men it is impossible, but not with God;

[1] The terms of the verse which follows vi. 44 are suggestive, viz.: "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God." There is no limit to the teaching. But the coming to Christ only takes place in the case of the responsive: "Every one that hath heard from the Father, *and hath learned*, cometh unto Me."

for with God all things are possible" (Mark x. 17–27 and parallels). And so for Jesus also, as for Paul, the hope of the world's salvation lay ultimately not in the readiness and simpleness of faith, but in the readiness and persistence of grace. The poet asks—

"Is there a reason in nature for these hard hearts?"

He has the authority, alike of Christ and of His great scholar, Paul, for his reply—

"O Lear,
That a reason out of nature must turn them soft, seems clear."[1]

ii. The second point is not directly a question as to the nature, origin, or object of faith, and yet in the truth as to this lies the answer to the problem it raises. It is the contention of Ritschl—and he is followed by Sanday, Gore, etc., in this country—that the proper object of justification is not the individual, but the Christian community as a whole. For a succinct summary of the argument in favour of it, reference may be made to Sanday and Headlam's *Commentary on Romans*, p. 122 ff.[2] And what is stated there fairly represents how slender is the support for it to be found in either Christ's own teaching or in the teaching of His followers. It is said to be a legacy from the Old Testament. If so, it was a legacy never claimed. As to the passages quoted, they all receive

[1] Browning, "Halbert and Hob"; cf. Arthur H. Clough's lines—

"One Power, too, is it who doth give
The food without us, and within
The strength that makes it nutritive:
He bids the dry bones rise and live,
And e'en in hearts depraved to sin
Some sudden gracious influence
May give the long lost good again,
And wake within the dormant sense
And love of good."—*Poems*, p. 14.

[2] For a concise summary of Ritschl's attitude, see Garvie, *The Ritschlian Theology*, pp. 319–321; also Gore, *The Epistle to the Romans* i.–viii., p. 34 f.; and Orr, *Ritschlian Theology*, p. 169 ff.

a perfectly natural explanation in view of the common benefits each enjoys who is a member of Christ's community, and who is only entitled to be a member of that society, because he does enjoy them. The appeal to the Christian rites, especially baptism, as ordinances of the society carries little weight; for, as we have repeatedly seen, these rites are declarative, not constitutive. They do not bestow the blessing which they represent. They are administered, where there is reason to believe the blessing exists. Above all, when we review the course of study which we have followed, the contention is seen to fail. Christ's mission, as He explained it and as His apostles understood it, was devoted, it is true, to the setting up of a society of men, each of whom would so act that in that society would be realised God's ideal of humanity. But the method He adopted for the creation of members was the drawing of individuals into a union with Himself, in which they would obtain a new standing before God, be animated with a new spirit toward their God and their fellow-men, and thus be fit for a place in that society. This union is consummated by the response of faith on man's part. That faith unites him with Christ, and in Christ he is right with God. The blessing comes to him directly and personally through Christ, through union with Him. And it is as a man who in Christ by faith is right with God, that he becomes a member of the Christian society, not as a member of the Christian society in virtue of a rite administered by it, or a faith exercised toward it and which unites with it, that he is right with God, justified. The latter conception savours of

> "Man's wonderful and wide mistake,
> Man lumps his kind i' the mass: God singles them
> Unit by unit."[1]

The Christian community has a function, however, in reference to faith. And it is not surprising that this

[1] Browning, *Ferishtah's Fancies*, "a Camel Driver."

should acquire greater prominence in the later writings than it did at the earliest stages. And it is quite intelligible how men allow the part, which it was designed and fitted to play, to assume such significance in their eyes as to obscure its own fundamental constitution. While there is not a single sentence that explicitly or implicitly suggests that it is only when within the Church men secure the privilege of justification, yet from the outset Christ saw in the Church a great instrument for the drawing of men into connection with Himself. As soon as Peter and the others discovered the secret of His Person and had risen to the belief of it, He felt that in them He had obtained a base of operations: "On this rock will I build My Church." And He conferred on them, as we have seen, large powers for the effective accomplishment of this design (Matt. xvi. 16–19; John xvi. 7–11). As the Christian community increased and began to recognise itself as in a measure the realisation of Christ's design (see Chap. V.), it growingly understood its own missionary and evidential value, and gathered all whom it awakened to a saving interest in Christ into its brotherly fellowship, within which the blessings of the kingdom were, if not first attained, yet most heartily enjoyed. And as Paul grasped this great truth, he felt free to speak of the Church as "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone" (Eph. ii. 20), and later to call a single community "a pillar and buttress of the truth" (1 Tim. iii. 14 f.).[1] It was the delight of fulfilling this missionary and evidential function with the happy interchange of spiritual privilege within its borders, that led men at a later date to say enthusiastically like Origen, "extra ecclesiam nemo salvatur."[2] But it was perversion

[1] See Hort's note, *Christian Ecclesia*, p. 172 ff., though there is room to doubt whether the anarthrous construction does justify all he reads into it.

[2] Gieseler, *Ecclesiastical History*, i. 257, where will also be found quoted the yet stronger utterances of Cyprian.

of the truth, when this was interpreted to mean that union with the Church was the ground of acceptance with God. It is easy to belittle the value of the Christian community. The spirit which does so constantly reappears. And so, while the followers of Jesus were quick to insist on the necessity of fellowship practised and maintained, if life was to be healthy and useful, and not become stunted and unfruitful, they would have repudiated with holy horror any attempt to make themselves or the community, of which they formed a part, in any way the indispensable intermediary between Christ and the fundamental blessing He bestows on the individual soul. They recognised the function which Christ had given them, the privileges which He had secured for them, and the spiritual account to which He had turned the natural social instincts of mankind, by breathing into them the sanctifying breath of the Spirit of God. But for them the only claim to a place in the community, and to the enjoyment of the benefits to be found in the practice of its fellowship, was a previous union with their Master by faith, a personal transaction between the soul and its Saviour alone. The place of the community, the relation to it, while inevitable, is quite subordinate to the place of Christ, and relation to Him.

CHAPTER X

Results and their Application

First Result: Fundamental and widespread Agreement—Bearing of this on Essence of Christianity.

Second Result: No Fixity of Terminology—Illustrations—Scientific Bearing of this Result—Practical Significance.

Third Result: Special Emphasis on one side of Truth does not imply Divergence from those left unnoticed—Christian Truth a whole—Illustrations in Proof of the Result—Light it throws: (1) On the Estimate of the Jewish Law—Christ's Attitude—James—Paul's various Positions—Hebrews—Their Harmony; (2) On the Question, Is there a legal View of Salvation in the New Testament?—How did such a Theory arise?

Fourth Result: Development is a Feature in the Presentation of Christian Teaching—Instances—Its Reasonableness—What constitutes Legitimate Development—Post-canonical Instance, the Doctrine of the Trinity—Later Developments—How to test them—The Test applied.

The Measure of the Authority of the Apostolic Teaching in View of our Results.

We have now completed our study of the fundamental truths taught by our Saviour, and have endeavoured to see the relation which the lines of teaching followed by the apostles bear to them. We saw, at the outset, that the apostles appealed throughout to Christ as their authority. They were simply exponents of what they had learnt in His school, and had been commissioned by Him to teach to others. We have seen how they interpreted this commission, and what place they allowed to the personal factor and to the play of circumstance in determining the form in which they should present the truth, while seeking to remain loyal to its substance. We are now in a

position, therefore, to formulate certain results, and in the light of these to look at some points, which have not been directly treated in the previous discussion, but which ought not to be overlooked.

I. The first broad general result is this. The truths, which Christ specially emphasised and treated as fundamental, His apostles understood as He understood them, and treated as He treated them.

Here, there is general and unmistakable agreement. The purpose of Christ's mission, the ideal in which its attainment would be fully realised, His own supreme significance for it, and the grounds of this in His unique personality, the faith by which men appropriate the benefits, which He has secured for them, and receive the power to use them,—on all these points there is no difference between the Master and His followers. Whatever be the special aspect of truth any individual amongst them may have specially in view in his particular writing, and to which, therefore, he gives special prominence, these are great fundamental assumptions without which it is impossible to proceed. These are matters with which nothing is set in competition. And when they are handled at any length, it is with that gravity and seriousness which belongs to the ground principles of a whole system of life and thought. There is no doubt among Christ's followers as to what Christ regarded as of supreme importance for the welfare of mankind. There is no doubt as to what it is their prime duty to fix indelibly in the minds of those they address. And there is not a document from the pen of one of them, which could be satisfactorily explained to anyone unacquainted with Christian truth, but would necessitate a statement on these points. This does not mean that with a dead uniformity they all simply traverse and retraverse the same ground. It means the very reverse. It does not mean that they have all

been careful to include the mention of every important point within the limit of their writing, however brief it be. They were no such martinets, imagining, if we may use a modern parallel, that they could not be evangelical, unless their every utterance were an evangelistic appeal. They knew better than that. James, for instance, says little or nothing about the sufferings of Chrst. No one but the writer of Hebrews points out Christ's priestly significance. On the other hand, the same writer never mentions the resurrection of Christ; and John, in his Epistle, has scarcely a line on the great outlook beyond the grave. Before the presentation of the divine provision for the perfecting of the saints, which appears in preponderating measure in Paul's later Epistles, we almost lose sight of the means for the reclamation of sinners, which bulk so largely in those of earlier date. But what is uniform is the common consensus as to the nature of salvation and the factors in its attainment, and the strict continuity between the apostles' utterances on this matter and those of the Master Himself. The results which we have attained in reference to each of the outstanding topics of Christ's own teaching—the kingdom of God, Himself, His Death, His resurrection, faith in Himself, union in Him between God and man—fully bear this out. The less we are left to inference from hints and suggestions, and the fuller the literature of any one author we possess, the clearer does this become. And when the case is made out for Paul, that member of the school who came least directly into contact with the Master, and the conditions of whose work offer the greatest contrast to those amid which Christ Himself moved and spoke, the significance of the fact is overwhelming. Paul is almost the first to take pen in hand. His literary work is finished, before the others have really begun. It has touched such a wide area of the Christian community, that it was inevitably familiar to

many of those who heard Christ speak. And yet, when writings from any of them appear, there is not a hint of dissent from the reflection of Christ's teaching, which is to be found in this most original formulation of them. What does that mean, but that amid all the diversity of form, they recognise here what we have found, teaching in substantial agreement with their own, teaching that showed an understanding of Christ identical with their own, teaching that laid the stress where they laid it; and they laid it where they did, because Christ did so. We know that, in certain quarters, there was grave opposition to Paul's presentation of Christian truth. But that opposition had no countenance from any who had been Christ's directly accredited followers, and has no representative among the Apostolic teachers of the New Testament. They saw in Paul's work a form suited to convey the great truths, which they had learned from Christ, to Gentile minds and hearts. In substance, it is Christ's truth. In essence, it is the great gospel of salvation which He brought and taught.

From all this it follows that Christianity, the truth about Christ's mission in this world, is not truly presented, when it is resolved, as it is by Matthew Arnold, into a tale of suave benevolence, amorphous and vague. Nor is it, after the author of *Ecce Homo*, the vitalising of an ethical system of a peculiarly lofty tone under the spell of a uniquely charming personality. We have not grasped it, when, with Herrmann, it evaporates into a non-mystical, but very mysterious provision for fellowship with God, enjoyed through the energies of a vividly realistic memory and imagination, concentrated upon the figure of the "historic" Christ.[1] It is not something indeterminate, of which each individual can make very much what he likes. It is the good news of the advent and sojourn, in the midst of mankind, of a gracious Personality, whose character,

[1] *Der Verkehr des Christen mit Gott*, c. ii.

whose nature, whose every act, is fraught with permanent value for the realisation of God's purpose in humanity, whose influence begins to tell as soon as He has enlisted the genuine confidence of any man, and increases just in proportion to the extent to which the man, following the discoveries of his faith, penetrates to an intelligent apprehension of what is, and what is involved in, the nature and career of such a Personality. It is primarily a faith, a faith in a person; but it is a faith which feels that it has not been loyal to the divine equipment of its own nature, to the interest it owes to the dignity of its object, or to the revelation of Himself which He has given, until it adds knowledge to faith, and obedience to love, can say, "I know whom I have believed," and has responded to the injunction, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." It can be stated in the form of a well-digested and articulated body of truth; and the believer, who intelligently grasps that, is not less, but more, truly Christian, because he does so.[1] And though Christ and His followers did not formulate a system of doctrine, it is to go in the face of the pains He took to teach them, and the wonderful harmony which they have maintained with Him, to ignore the importance for Christian life of all the truths, His divinity, His death, His resurrection, as well as His kingdom and His character, on which He laid special stress.

II. A second general result is this: while preserving the same thought, there is often variation in the terminology in which it is expressed.

This is so obviously what might have been expected, that it seems almost trifling to state it. And yet it has at once a scientific and a practical bearing, frequently ignored. There are justifications, therefore, for stating this second very obvious result.

[1] Cf. Bovon, *La Théologie du Nouveau Testament*, ii. 350 f.

Before pointing out what these bearings are, it may be well to recall a few illustrations in proof of it. There is the use as to Christ's own name. In the Gospels, He is predominantly called Jesus, or Jesus of Nazareth. "Christ" is still mainly an official title. In later writings, "Christ" has been so appropriated to Jesus, that it is used virtually as a proper name. This variation in the naming of our Saviour corresponds to a change in the official title. Among the Jews, who were expecting a Messiah, and who had very definite though erroneous views, requiring much correction, of what Messiah meant, it was natural that Jesus should be called the Christ. He was, in truth, what the Christ should be. But Gentles had no such associations with the name "the Christ," "the Anointed." And to take its place another term is used, ὁ *Κύριος*, the Lord, an epithet, in classic Greek, at once of gods and men, the head of the family, the master of his slaves, and in the Septuagint the regular equivalent of Jehovah. Later still, His title is "the Saviour," "the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ." But the fundamental idea of His office as divine Redeemer and Master remains ever the same.

Take again the term in which to describe comprehensively the essentials of the Christian movement. It is "the Gospel," "the Way," "the Name," "the Truth," "the Faith"—different aspects of the same thing. Its realisation is the establishment of a community, which may be called with equal truth the Kingdom of Heaven, the Kingdom of God, or the Church. Admission to it is variously described as "repenting and being converted," "being converted and becoming as little children," "believing the good news," "entering the kingdom," "seeing the kingdom," "entering into life," and "being in the truth." To tell how this is brought about, Christ uses the figure of generation; John follows Him; and Paul ex-

presses the same idea in terms of creation. The position of those who are thus admitted is pictured in an erring son now penitent, restored to all his privileges as a son. John says he has a right to become a child of God. Paul uses legal terms, though in no mere legal spirit, and says he is restored to his right position and is a son, justified or adopted according as you consider what God has done, or where the man finds himself. The man who is there, the Epistle to the Hebrews says, is perfected. Those in this position are sometimes called "disciples," sometimes "those who are being saved," sometimes "those who believe," sometimes "brethren," sometimes "saints," sometimes "those who are perfect." Now it is to their credit, like newborn babes, to desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby. Again, it is to their shame that they still need milk, when, by reason of age, they should be fit for the strong meat of full-grown men. Their attainment may be so little that Paul can only call them carnal, and yet they truly call Jesus Lord, which only those can do who have the Spirit. What all this shows is that, as Matthew Arnold contends, the Scripture is literature, not dogma. In the documents which preserve the teaching of Christ and the teaching of the apostles, we have no set of technical terms. Even within the limits of a single writer the same term is not used with a uniform signification. Salvation is used in all the tenses to describe the past, the present, and the future of eternal life. The language is all used with the freedom and elasticity of popular address, not with the precision of the class-room. It is addressed not to students, anxious about strict definition and limitation of terms for purposes of exact science. It possesses the freshness that comes from the entrance into the life and thought of men of new important truth, a very revelation which even in the most plastic and delicate language of antiquity often found no terms adequate for its expression, and had to resort to

figure, and allusion, and explanation, as it used now this term, now that, to convey its meaning, until it suffused an old term with its spirit and made its own, or coined a new word for itself. Hence the wealth of form, in which the same truth appears, is an evidence, not of diversity of view, but of degree in literary skill in finding fitting terms in which to clothe and circulate the new Christian truth.

Now the scientific bearing of this result of our study is this. It teaches us to discount the degree of divergence of statement between teacher and teacher. Where it is simply a matter of terms, the divergence indicates no more than difference of capacity in felicitous use of language to express the same truth, and serves to emphasise the fundamental agreement among the teachers.[1] Through failure to remember this distinction among kinds of divergence, the various teachers of the New Testament have often been made to appear as if standing far farther apart than they really do. A difference about words has been magnified into a difference about truth, divergences discovered where the authors, to whom they are attributed, would have been the most astonished to hear of them, divergences from the Master which would have led the scholar to exclaim, "Perish every word I have written, if my clumsy way of putting it has seemed to divide me from the Master's perfect utterance of what I think and what I believe!"

There is also a practical side to this. There are sensitive souls, anxious as to the genuineness of their interest in Christ, who imagine that their individual spiritual experience must correspond with all that is said in Scripture. To take the commencement of the spiritual life as an

[1] "This is the true harmony, consisting not in minute coincidences of words and events, but in communion of spirit" (Jowett, *Commentary on Romans* iv. 6–8).

example, they think that they have to go through a series of processes,—repent, be born again, be converted, believe, be saved. And if they cannot objectify each of these as a distinct experience, they have grave doubts as to the soundness of their spiritual standing. And yet all of these are simply slightly different aspects of the same spiritual crisis, of which, if one of them is a reality, all must co-exist with it. And the needless perplexity and distress might have been escaped, and can be dispelled, by observing the result we have found, that in Christian truth, even as between His apostles and Christ, there is often variation of terminology, while the fundamental thought expressed is the same.

III. The third result is that in the apostolic teaching one writer gives greater prominence to one aspect of Christ's teaching, another to another, without thereby indicating deviation from the points left in the background.

The last clause of the statement of this result is, of course, the point that is challenged. But my contention is that the result of our studies reveals nothing in the emphasis, which is laid by individual writers or in single writings, on particular aspects of truth, to justify the conclusion, that they held views antagonistic to those expressed in other quarters on the points on which they maintain more or less silence. We have found such a wonderfully complete and symmetrical body of truth embraced in our Saviour's teaching, and bound into one whole by vital ties, that it hangs or falls together. And a man who expresses his adherence to it, and shows an intelligent appreciation of its spirit at one point, must be assumed to be in sympathy throughout, or else provide us with some explanation of how he vindicates his adherence just where he does, while he lets the rest go. If he makes no such attempt in the midst of a community, where the rounded

whole is familiar, and which welcomes his utterances, his silence expresses not antagonism, but consent.[1]

In the brief review of the contents of the several sets of teaching in Chap. I., we met with proof of the variety of aspects of truth which appealed to particular minds and received special prominence in particular writings. More intimate study has only confirmed the impression. While no single topic of our Saviour's teaching has been ignored, some have received greater attention from one follower, others from another. Take what was embraced, for instance, in what Christ taught under the name of the Kingdom. Here James fastened almost exclusively on the practical duties which it involved. Peter saw chiefly the encouragement which the prospect of its realisation afforded. Paul laid special stress on the conditions of entrance and the spiritual endowments for the enjoyment of its privileges and fulfilment of its duties, and its appearance on earth in the form of the Church. John, in the Apocalypse, sketched the conflict through which it would be realised; while in his Gospel and Epistles he emphasised the nature of the life within its sway. But do these involve mutual contradictions? They only indicate the writers' sense of the varying need of the hour. There is a like diversity as to the reproduction of what Christ taught about Himself. The Synoptics bring especially into view the external traits of that perfect human life. John deliberately sets himself to complete the picture, to provide what Clement of Alexandria[2] calls a spiritual gospel, going to the inner sphere, the springs of grace and truth, and so to let us see the manifestation of the glory of the

[1] Compare Godet's witty remark: "The true Paul could (otherwise) only have written one Epistle; for if he had written a second, he could either only repeat the first (and the second incur therefore the suspicion of forgery), or differ from it (and the second be suspected as the work of a different writer)" (Introduction, *St. Paul's Epistles*, p. 167).

[2] So Eusebius, *H. E.* vi. 14.

only-begotten Son of God. But we have seen already that there is here no thought of contradiction. James again dwells on Christ's moral authority, Paul on those acts in which in Him the Divine entered into such an intimate union, and was so closely identified, with humanity, that He is for ever the God-man, while in the Epistle to the Hebrews it is His heavenly offices for mankind in view of such a relation that come specially into notice. Similarly, the work of Christ receives varied presentation by various hands, but the germ of each is found in Christ's own teaching; and so too with the teaching about the Spirit. Faith we have just treated of in the previous chapter, and there, if James insists on its proving its genuineness by taking practical form, John no less insists on definite conviction, Hebrews portrays its invincible power and limitless range, and Paul demonstrates its capacity for effective, subtle, vital, spiritual unions between person and person, which explains the Master's thought, when He made it the imperious demand for the rescue of men. We have seen already how closely allied are all these various schemes of thought, but in their diversity affording a refreshing interest to the study of separate minds imbued with the same great truth.

But it is necessary to look under this head at two points which have not been treated in the course of our study, though they have received incidental mention, and which ought to be noticed in a work like this. They are these: It is contended (1) that there is a fundamental divergence of view as to the purpose and value of the Jewish law; and (2) that there is a type of doctrine in the New Testament which represents a way of salvation by works in strong contrast to Paul's view of salvation by faith alone.

(1) If an understanding can be reached as to the former of these points, a long step will be made towards the truth with reference to the other. And it must be at once conceded that there is a great variety of view as

to the value and purpose of the Jewish law. That, however, is a different thing from an admission that the divergence is fundamental. To say nothing of the fact that it is looked at in more ways than one by the same writer, the motive that leads to the consideration of the question is not the same in each case, and that accounts for the divergences. One great duty that Jesus felt incumbent upon Him was to rescue the law from its would-be champions. They, He said, had made it void by their tradition, the jesuitry of which He denounces with righteous scorn (Mark ii. 23–28; Luke vi. 1–5; Matt. xv. 1–20; Mark vii. 1–23, etc.). But while rejecting these, He shows a respectful attention to many provisions of the law itself, and inculcates a like attention on the part of others (Matt. v. 17–20, xxiii. 2, 3). If you ask why, it is because it is God's law, and He has a profound regard for what is His Father's (Matt. xv. 6). But He assumes and exercises a right of revision that shows clearly that He did not regard it as final (Matt. v. 21–48; Mark x. 2–9). Valuable as it was, He knew its limits, and where it would fail. His interview with the young ruler seeking eternal life, and the reference to it there, reveals His conviction, that as surely as a man makes earnest with it, he will be left unsatisfied, crying, "What lack I yet?" Then Christ has His opportunity, when men turn to Him from the failure of the law (Matt. xix. 16–22). For while to Him the law, in its ceremonial as well as its moral enactments, is God's law, it is only provisional. He supersedes its authority. And it is only retained in so far as it can be interpreted in terms of His statement of what is fundamental in it, namely, love to God, and love to our fellow-men (Matt. xxii. 40). It remains, not as a means of salvation, but as a guide to the lines along which lies the path of the saved life.[1]

[1] On Christ's attitude towards the Jewish law, see R. Mackintosh, *Christ and the Jewish Law*; and Meinhold, *Jesus und das Alte Testament*.

Among Christ's followers, it is remarkable that James, the supposed champion of Judaic Christianity, in his Epistle has nothing to say about this matter. He speaks, indeed, of the law, but he would be a bold man who would claim for the language of James in i. 23 ff., ii. 8–13, a reference to the Jewish law in any sense other than that in which it is understood by Christ, and is flooded by Him with that new spirit that makes all the difference between the law as given by Moses and the grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ. To do so would be deliberately to ignore the context. But what of him in the Acts of the Apostles? (xv. 13–21). Is he not the advocate of the permanence of the Jewish law there? So far from that, as Ritschl has admirably argued,[1] there he is the man willing to drop everything except what must be retained meanwhile to facilitate intercourse between those brought up in Judaism and those brought into touch with Christ from Paganism. And it is to force on his language and his practice a construction which he expressly repudiates, to treat it as an assertion of the permanent obligatoriness of the Jewish law for all Christians. He insists on no such demand. He dissociates himself from any who do (Acts xv. 24).

In Paul there is to be found a variety of positions. And they are determined entirely by the pleas that he found made on behalf of the law, and the treatment he had to mete out to different advocates. In the Epistle to the Galatians he had to deal with a party who were asserting for the Jewish law a place in the spiritual history of a man, which he regarded as fatal to any true spiritual life. That pretension he strenuously opposes. But then the dilemma arises, what of the law then? Has it ever served any purpose? Had it ever any right to be spoken of as God's law? Yes, he says, it had a pedagogic purpose. It was a temporary

[1] *Die Entstehung der altkatholischen Kirche*, 2nd ed. pp. 122–146.

measure, used by God to prepare men for Christ (Gal. iii. 24). In Romans he goes farther. With his keen insight into, and correct diagnosis of, human perversity, he detects an effect produced by the law. It became a provocative to sin. This was not the purpose for which God intended the law. It was an abuse of it by sin, which, however, only served to make sin more odious in the eyes of any reflecting observer; and so it still served God's ends. All through this argument he is most careful to insist on the goodness of the law and its gracious intention; on the privilege, too, that was theirs who possessed it; but its purpose was temporary and preparative, not final (Rom. vii. 7–15, ix. 4, 5). And all it anticipated was only attainable by the advent and mission of Christ, which was its end indeed, but only because it was, not its abrogation, but its fulfilment (Rom. iii. 31, x. 4). It is in line with this that in 2nd Corinthians he speaks of it as a ministration of death (2 Cor. iii. 7 ff.). He is looking there at it in the light of its effects. Galatians states his view of its purpose. In the practical parts of his Epistles he still enforces it as a rule for Christian practice in terms of Christ's re-enactment of it, transfused with a love of which it is only the expression (Rom. xiii. 8–10). Thus the law for Paul is ever an object of reverence and a rule of life. It is only rejected as an adequate instrument of salvation.

In Hebrews still another aspect of the matter arises. Once again the law is set aside. But here it is the law especially on its ceremonial side. On the surface it seems to be done with a far gentler hand than by the staggering blows of Paul. The argument is apparently only a plea that in Christ's Priesthood and Sacrifice there is something not different from the old law; only something better. But when considered more closely, and when the betterness is seen to consist in power to effect in reality what the Jewish law could only symbolise, to effect for the soul what the other

could only do for the body, for externals, it is clear that there is a difference of the most radical kind. And I question if the apologetic of Hebrews is not really the most drastic assault of all.

But in all this is there a departure from Christ? Is there a fundamental antagonism between the varying views? There is not. They simply correspond to the changing circumstances which the writers had to face. The followers draw their inspiration from Christ. They had found liberty in Him. He had transformed the law for them, and they had seen its true place and significance. They were prepared, therefore, when the time arrived, to carry farther that respectful disregard of it in the letter, which they had seen in Him. They saw with ever greater clearness that it had served its day. They took the hint which Christ had given, and used it, not as its slaves, but with the freedom of sons of God. One did so in one direction, another in another. But it is in Christ's spirit and on His initiative that they act throughout.

(2) Now this prepares us to face the question, Is there a view of the way of salvation, countenanced by New Testament writers, and, as they supposed, warranted by an appeal to Jesus Christ, distinct from that exclusively insisted on by Paul, namely, by faith? The most accessible and vivid presentation of such a supposed view is to be found in Professor McGiffert's *History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*.[1] There it is represented that there was a legal type of Christianity. In it, however, the observance of the law—where law, it should be mentioned, means the law as Christ transformed it, and is so far equivalent to a man's own efforts in righteousness—was not an end itself, but a means to the attainment of salvation. Salvation was not a present possession, but only a prospect of the future. Faith had a place, and an important place, in inducing and enabling men to

[1] Pp. 440-482.

keep this law by which salvation is attained; but the attainment depends on the observance of the law, not on the faith. This, it is said, was the conception of Christianity prevalent among all who did not succumb to Paul's spell, or come under his influence; and it is common to the Epistle of James, the Apocalypse, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Pastoral Epistles, Jude, 2 Peter, and the Sub-Apostolic writers.[1] It is important to note that McGiffert holds that this view was not so true to the teaching of the Master as Paul's view (p. 447). It was due to an inheritance of prevalent ideas from which its advocates had not succeeded in shaking themselves free. And we need not hesitate to admit that this view did exist. It is the type of legalism which always tends to recur. It is the mistake, which William Blake reprehends so strikingly in his quaint lines—

> "Jehovah's finger wrote the law.
> He wept; then rose in zeal and awe,
> And in the midst of Sinai's heat
> Hid it beneath the Mercy Seat.
> O Christians, Christians! tell me why
> You rear it upon your altars high?"[2]

But Blake was only repeating the attack in his own way and in his day, which Paul directed against it in the Epistle to the Galatians. And what we are concerned about is, whether it has any countenance from the apostolic writings appealed to. Did some of Christ's best accredited followers so mistake His meaning? We have already seen the true

[1] As regards the Sub-Apostolic and other Anti-Nicene writers it would be worth while to consult a remarkable article by Harnack, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, i. 82, "Geschichte der Lehre von der Seligkeit allein durch den Glauben in der Alten Kirche." In this Harnack argues that this doctrine was really the view held by many sects regarded as heretical by the orthodox community, and that its place in the orthodox creed was only vindicated by Augustine. The suspicious element in this view is that this is undoubtedly the doctrine taught by Paul, and the orthodox community has preserved his writings.

[2] *Poems*, Camelot Classics, p. 227.

sense in which to understand the emphasis throughout on the observance of God's law. It is due to the commanding place held by ethical interests in Christian circles. It is as strong in Paul as it is in James. There is a probationary view of the life of the Christian to be found in Paul's teaching outside of the Pastoral Epistles, and to be found in Christ's teaching, which corresponds to all that is said in James or Hebrews. On the other hand, we have seen already that even in the teaching of James faith, properly understood, has the determinative place on man's side. It is passing strange how McGiffert (p. 459) and those whom he follows can think of deducing from James's language in ii. 14 ff. that the lifeless shell James scornfully rejects there had any resemblance to real faith, or could, by the addition of works to it, be set up as the faith required in the Christian. James's contention is that the only faith, worthy of the name, is faith in vital, not formal, union with works, an energy, that is to say, and not mere mental reflection. As to Hebrews, a passage, xii. 18–24, in which the argument of the Epistle is summarised and applied, explodes the hope of finding this legal conception there. It puts the gospel in Christ in touch, not with the scene of lawgiving, Mount Sinai, but with the scene of sacrifice, Mount Zion, which is as much as to say that the gospel is not the institution of a law, but a new provision for establishing gracious relations between God and those who had not been able to bear the law. The crowning feature of this provision is Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel, *i.e.* not of vengeance, but of pardon and capacity for holy fellowship. And all this is within their reach on the basis of cordial acceptance (ver. 25 ff.; cf. x. 38, 39). It is the identical argument which Paul uses in Gal. iv. 21–31. By this we arrive at the answer to our question. The legal conception of Christianity has no

countenance from apostolic writers.[1] They had not so learned Christ.

But this misconception is due to the varying presentation of works—*i.e.* practical Christian activity—in different writers. In view of their teaching on faith, their silence gives consent to what Paul's circumstances compelled him to assert so energetically, namely, that no works, the works of Christian activity just as little as those of Jewish legalism, could earn salvation. That is a gift, God's gift, and spiritual gifts can only be obtained by acceptance, which in spiritual matters is called faith. But works are not without significance. They are inevitable, where true faith is. And their place is variously, yet harmoniously, stated by Christ's followers. Ritschl happily focuses the variety in a sentence: "Peter does not think of works as the consequence of faith, like Paul; nor as the concrete material of faith, like James: but good conduct, obedience to the truth, the righteousness attained in works, constitute for him the proof for the certainty and reliability of the faith." It is only doubtful, if the sentence should have begun as it does, for it was quite possible for Peter to think his own thought, and James and Paul's thought too, for there is no incompatibility between them. They are different aspects of the one homogeneous truth. They are quite explicable in line with what we have found as a third general result of our study, that, while abiding loyal to the same fundamental teaching, one writer sometimes emphasises one side of it, another another, without intending any opposition to, or deviation from, the views expressed by others.

IV. There remains the fourth general result, and it is this. Passing beyond the original utterances of Christ, His followers have, in some instances, drawn deductions, given

[1] "The unequivocal standpoint of the New Judaism had not been the doctrine of the primitive Church and apostles. They had lived in the free Spirit of Jesus, and, thanks to unbelieving Judaism, they had preserved their attitude of spiritual independence of the law" (Weizsäcker, *Apostolic Age*, i. 269).

amplifications, and presented developments of His teaching. The question is, Are these legitimate?

It will be worth while to recall some of the cases where we have found such developments. There was, to begin with, that very remarkable development of the conception of the Christian community by which, under the leadership of Paul, it gradually came to recognise itself as an organic whole in union with Christ, and to know itself in this organic relationship for the realisation, in ever increasing measure, of Christ's ideal which He had spoken of frequently as the Kingdom, and twice as His Church. This was a development by which, out of experience, a truer conception of Christ's meaning was reached than had at first been grasped, and by development they returned to Christ. Similarly there was a distinct advance under the discipline of experience in the understanding of the future of the Kingdom. The more realistic and materialistic elements in the eschatological conceptions were gradually dropped. The early, eager expectancy of an immediate triumphant and final *παρουσία* subsided under the sobering influence of delay. Not that hope grew dim; but the vision was clarified. The practised eye gauged the foreshortening better. The spiritual elements came into bolder relief. And men came to think less of the prospect of heaven, and more of the prospect of the unveiled vision, face to face, of heaven's King, more and more of fellowship in unhampered directness with the soul's Lord. But there again, the advance was from the glowing imagery of Christ's more popular address to the spiritual kernel of His private talks with His most intimate friends. There was undoubted development also in the disciples' thought of the Person and Office of Christ. What they perceived of His Person disclosed to them His official rank. Seen as the Christ, they entertained still more exalted views of His Person. It would be needless to recall the stages reached

by different spiritual leaders, as they rose by a necessary compulsion to regard Him as in the highest sense divine.[1] It is only important to remember that, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, it is under the impressive sense of His incomparable identification with humanity that its author proclaims Him humanity's High Priest. It is, again, through His overmastering conviction that Christ is all in all to men, that Paul perceives His cosmic significance. If his argument seems to proceed in the reverse direction in Colossians, it is because, having already from thought of His relation to mankind mastered the thought of His relation to the created universe, he can now unfold the truth in historic sequence, and show how Redemption reproduces Creation. So when John proclaims Him the Logos, identifies Him, that is, with the profoundest conception of speculative reason, and therein says the last word from his immediate followers about their Master, it is not in order to resolve Christian truth into a philosophical system, or to convey the impression that the truest conception of Christ is as a kind of symbol for men's noblest ideals, but to remind philosophy that the greatest truths in the world are not concepts, but persons. It is to pave the way back to the meaning of Christ's sublime assertion, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. . . . He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father." We have seen how the thought of Christ's work grew upon Paul; how Christ crucified and risen gradually dominated all his thought; and how far he carried his efforts to understand and to explain why, for man's salvation, it was necessary that for man Christ should die. No other cultivated so assiduously the germs of thought sown by Christ on this absorbing topic, probably because no other of the early followers felt so keenly, as his first impression of Jesus, the offence, and then the

[1] Cf. Lidgett, *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*, p. 354 f., and Dale quoted there.

power, of His Cross. There is meaning of an intensely personal kind in what he says in 1 Cor. i. 22 ff. The Cross was ever reasserting itself to him as the solvent for the deepest problems of conscience, or the most baffling tasks of humanity. And it was to it he constantly turned in order to penetrate farther into the mystery of God. In like manner, his eager mind appropriated and carried farther every hint he received of the energy and potency of the Divine Spirit, though, far as he carried it, it only served to bridge the way back, for the memory of John, to the most significant words of Christ Himself on this momentous theme.

It is needless to carry illustration farther. It is to shut one's eyes to a most patent feature of New Testament teaching to ignore the evidence on every side of the development within it of Christian truth. It would only be surprising, if it were absent. It was anticipated in the method of Christ's own teaching. In Chapter III. we noted that Jesus deliberately pursued the plan of gradually unfolding the truth to His followers, according as they were able to bear it. It forced itself upon our notice in the very order in which the books of our New Testament appeared. Circumstances arose which called upon their authors to address themselves to fresh problems and to expound the aspects of Christian truth to which they were led for a solution. And Christ Himself had assured His disciples that He had many things to say to them which, prior to His death and resurrection, they were not fit to bear, but that under the guidance of the Spirit, whom He would send, they would be led into all the truth. But, it may be asked, did this not imply advance by further revelation, not by development? There is not a hint of that. Christ, as we have already seen, spoke of Himself, rather than of any words He uttered or truths He declared, as the revelation. And the mission, on which He was to send the Spirit, was

to take of the things of Himself and show them to the disciples. The meaning obviously is that by the Spirit's guidance they were to be led to a fuller and fuller understanding of the truth, which in the knowledge of Him they already possessed. And it is a significant fact in this connection that the last work we have from apostolic hands is a Gospel, a retelling of the story, that is to say, of the life of Jesus. The man who, admittedly, has travelled farthest on the line of development in reference to the most momentous matter in the Christian faith, namely, the question, Who was Jesus? and who, with a simple boldness and grandeur that is awe-inspiring, has said of Jesus that He "was the Word, and the Word was God,"—what has he done to justify his assertion? He has appealed to Jesus Himself. From the treasures of his memory, quickened into rare activity by the delighted insight of faith and love, John has recalled things Jesus Himself had done and said, which fully justified the road that had been travelled by men learning to attribute to Him ever higher dignity and name. The meaning of this cannot be missed. Development has its place; it is legitimate; but it has its limits. It is a spiral round Christ, and mounts higher by returning upon Him. It never can leave behind what it once has learnt of Him. Let it do that, and it goes astray.

Since the closing of the record, there has still been development in many directions. I only refer to one phase, the development of the doctrine of the Trinity. Perhaps the truest word that can be said about the formulation of that doctrine is Dale's suggestive statement, "The doctrine of the Trinity (is) the Christian attempt to assert the unity of God."[1] The meaning of that is, that the emphasis in the statement of the doctrine lies not on the assertion that the Persons in the Trinity are three, but on the assertion that the three are one God. None but the most superficial

[1] Dale, *Christian Doctrine* p. 320.

reader could fail to note that, in the New Testament and in any spiritual responsiveness to its teaching, the soul of man is met by the Divine along three well-marked lines. In his thought of the Universe God meets a man as its great Architect and Engineer. In the historic figure of Jesus Christ, God meets him again. In his own spiritual life, forces which he can only think of as Divine touch him once more. His experience is verified by the run of Scripture. Constantly, not only the broad scheme of redemption, but the ordinary turn of New Testament speech takes on this threefold colour. Without thinking of it theologically, Master and School alike fall spontaneously into what we call Trinitarian terminology. Passages taken almost at random bring this out. In the twelfth chapter of Luke Jesus passes in quick review the God, before whose presence the world lies spread, Himself the Son of man, on loyalty to whom all hope of mediation with God depends, the Holy Spirit, whom to blaspheme is to forfeit forgiveness. In similar close contiguity, in the previous chapter, stand Father, Spirit, and the Bringer-in of God's kingdom. In all three Gospels we have the account of Christ's baptism, where Father, Spirit, and acknowledged Son appear. In Matthew there is the Baptismal formula. John's Gospel, especially in chaps. xiv.–xvi., bristles with instances. Or take a brief paragraph, Acts v. 30–32, "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, hanging Him on a tree: Him did God exalt with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him." 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14; Gal. iv. 4–6; 2 Cor. i. 18–22, xiii. 14; Rom. v. 5–8; Tit. iii. 4–7; 1 Pet. i. 18–22; Heb. ii. 3, 4; Rev. i. 4, 5; 1 John iv. 13–15 show the prevalence of this trend of thought throughout the New Testament. My argument is not that these are proof

texts for the doctrine of the Trinity as held by the Early Church. But it is the phenomenon which these present, this appearance of the divine under a well-marked threefold guise, which forced the followers of Christ soon to ask themselves what it meant, and how it was to be explained. They were not Tritheists. They were strongly monotheistic. And yet they had to face facts that would not fit into a dry Unitarianism. Even the Jewish conception of God would not do so. And it was in the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity that the Church soon formulated the answer to the facts of the case. These facts are all found in the teaching of Christ and His apostles. It is the truth they held about God in its richest form. But it is a truth of experience discovered by faith, and is a source of spiritual profit, not when treated as a point of departure in the study of Christian Theology, but only when men arrive at it by spiritual compulsion as the result of personal acquaintance with God in Christ; when they speak of the one God they know as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, because they can do no other.

The case of the doctrine of the Trinity helps us to gauge aright still later developments of Christian thought. As was only to be expected with anything so vital as Christian truth, it has constantly been assuming new forms of expression. There have been great types, such as the ecclesiastical type of Cyprian, the theological type of Augustine, the earlier monastic type, the form this assumed with Francis of Assisi, the Reformation type. In our own day we have had the reassertion of the kingdom, both theologically and ecclesiastically, and, by the Christian Socialists, economically. The dignity of the Person of Christ has had new emphasis laid on it by the prominence given to the Incarnation. There is a side of Sacramentarianism, which is a reassertion of the value of the work of Christ. In movements like the Missionary enterprise, the Keswick

School, and the Sacerdotal claims of Clergy, there is a reassertion of the living presence of the Exalted Christ with His Church and by His Spirit. And some of these are accepted as legitimate developments of the teaching of Christ, some are challenged as perversions. Has our past study helped us to any kind of principle, by which to test the legitimacy of anything that makes such claims? It has taught us to expect that there will be development. It has taught us to expect that Christianity will always find in Christ, and in some fundamental position taken up by Christ, the answer to the deepest needs of every generation. It has taught us to expect that it will afford these answers not simply by repetition in the old form of the familiar truth. It will restate itself in terms of the new situation, and, in doing so, pass to a still better understanding of itself. But it has let us see that every movement which claims to be such an advance on Christian truth must, to begin with, show itself to be deep rooted in some undoubted truth of Christ's own teaching; it must be in harmony with the other sides of the truth which Christ presented; and it must lead back to clearer conceptions of the original truth in Christ. Views of which this holds good can alone be regarded as legitimate developments of Christian teaching.

If this principle is applied to the topics which have been instanced, it will be seen that, if the reassertion of the Kingdom means a great reminder that Christ's ideal commences its realisation here, and that salvation in no sense belongs to a man whose moral, social, and civil obligations are left unfulfilled or are not determined by God's will, and if the reassertion is an application of this to present-day conditions, showing how it bears on our modern life in quarters where its place was not hitherto recognised, then it is a legitimate development of Christ's own teaching. But if it resolves Christ's ideal into a

scheme for the world-wide attainment of mere earthly affluence and pleasure, treats the spiritual as secondary, or ignores the supreme need of Christ's work, accomplished and appropriated, for its true realisation, it is no development, but an aberration, leading to darkness and not to light. Or take the prominence given to the Incarnation. If this is done at the expense of the Cross, if it so bases the salvation of men on Christ's assumption of humanity that the impression is left, intentionally or not, that the result would have been attained even had He never died, this again is no development, but a bold arrestment of Christ's own unfolding of His teaching, when only half of it was declared. And it has to be met, as Dr. Forsyth has happily put it, by recalling the Church from Bethlehem to Calvary, from Christmas to Good Friday and Easter Day. But if it means, in view of our better understanding of the laws which govern human nature and the ties which bind humanity together, new insight into the significance of the life and nature and personality of Jesus Christ, and of the influence which His place within humanity gives Him, then it is a movement to be hailed with gratitude and satisfaction. In so far as Sacramentarianism leads back to the Cross, or leads us to inquire more carefully as to the blessing that accrues to the observance of the rites which Christ sanctioned and enjoined, its services to a better understanding of Christian truth are real. But when it offers symbols as the reality, a rite for a living Spirit, a dramatic spectacle instead of a dying Saviour, it is not leading nearer to the truth, but away from it. As to Sacerdotalism, and Higher Life, and Missions, when these mean, the one the pretensions of a class, the other a pharisaic aloofness, and the third an effort to spread Western commerce or stamp Teutonic civilisation on other types of humanity, one can only wonder at the narrow-mindedness that inspires them. But when to the priesthood of a class the Church of Christ

replies with a claim for the priesthood of all believers; when it maintains that the so-called "higher life" is nothing but the normal Christian life, and refuses to countenance as truly Christian anything less; and when it regards its missions, not as an adjunct, but as the great purpose of its own existence, namely, to bring men back, through the news of Christ, to the spirit of sonship to God and brotherhood to men, this is to see with new clearness the priceless blessing of the knowledge of the activity of the Exalted Christ and the Life-giving Spirit. It is to carry farther the line the apostles began to draw at Pentecost, take up, with new perception of its bearing, the truth they then perceived.

This must suffice by way of indication of the application of our fourth result to present-day movements of Christian life and thought. But it may be permitted, in a closing paragraph, to indicate one grand result that may be drawn from the study as a whole, and that is the position that should be accorded to the apostles as exponents of Christ's teaching. We have seen their loyalty to His teaching and authority. We noted, in an early chapter, how strenuously they asserted their independence of all other teachers, but their absolute subordination to Him. And what has come out in their treatment of the fundamental positions assumed and taught by Christ attests the sincerity and truth of their word. They have introduced nothing, they have emphasised nothing, but what they received from Him. He is the authority; and the authority is personal. His words spoken during His earthly career cast light forward on work He had then still to do or is still doing, and that again has reflected a new significance on the utterances themselves. Words and Work alike derive their weight from the fact that they are His. And it is the faith in Him of that all-embracing type that gathers under its sway the whole manhood, which perceives the authority, and penetrates to the depth of meaning, in

His words. And yet it is legitimate—and more than legitimate, it is obligatory—to recognise also the authority of His apostles, and of the teaching which emanates from them. It is not original. It is derived. But it ranks close behind His own, just because of their nearness to the primal source, of the vividness which still remained of the impression of Himself as He was known on earth, and of the immediate quickening of their spiritual understanding by the entrance of the Divine Enlightener, the Holy Spirit, whom Christ had promised for the very purpose of leading them into all the truth. It is this which has secured for them the unrivalled place they hold in the esteem of the Christian Church. It was a feeling of this kind which led to the early formation of their writings into a Canon of Scripture, and which induces disputants of later days to appeal to them as the reliable exponents of the teaching of Christ. A refusal to accede to such an appeal and to abide by its decision, a demand instead for quiet acquiescence in the dicta of later teachers, forecloses discussion on common ground, and is like fear of the result of a resort to the Supreme Courts. Christ indeed stands behind them. But to get behind them to Christ Himself, we must perforce go through them. We owe our knowledge of all Christ said and did, our primary knowledge of Christ Himself, to them. If He becomes our Friend, it is because we have been introduced to Him by His earlier friends, who in the Gospels tell us how He lived and spoke, and in the Epistles what He did for them. We may get to know Him even better than they did. The light of His subsequent achievements from His throne, which were mainly a hope to them, may show us more. The Spirit that taught them is with us still. But we can never dispense with them. Nothing can supersede the value of their account of His personality, His life, and His words. They were the first to experience those operations of the spiritual

life, which owe their existence to Him. They record them with the vividness and accuracy, begotten at once of their novelty and of a sense of their importance. And nothing subsequent can ever rival them in this service. We do them an injustice, if we exalt them above Christ. We do them as great injustice, when we forget that without them we could have had no certainty as to the mind of Christ.

It is easy to suggest that Christ's personality was so commanding, that it would have asserted itself throughout all subsequent ages even without a record. But it is a statement that has not a shred of evidence to support it. Its only conceivable ground would be the idea that, if He is indeed the Son of God, He is able to dispense with all human agents whatever. And if in the abstract that is true, it loses all force since, as a matter of fact, He has not done so. If it means that, without the apostles, thousands of others would have passed on the blessed tradition, what is that but to recognise again the need of a record, to forget the freaks of tradition when severed from a fixed report, and to belittle the reliability of the very thousands looked to, for it is they who have passed down these writings as the truest embodiment of the tradition as it reached them? To set the Apostolic teaching aside is to reflect on the wisdom of the Master, who selected its writers as His disciples, and who guided them by His Spirit to adopt the method of writing their Gospels and Epistles, in order to preserve and transmit to the coming ages the message which He had left heaven to bring. The intimacy between the teaching of Christ and the teaching of His apostles on the one hand, and, on the other, the vigour and individuality of that spiritual life which He infused into them and which preserved all of them, while abiding most loyal to His fundamental truth, from descending to a mere parrot repetition of His sayings, or from attempting an imitation of the matchless form in which He cast His

teaching, give the group a distinction and a character all its own, and afford a rare sense of confidence, when one turns to it for instruction in the things of Christ. Master and followers understand each other. They are reliable witnesses for all time to the truth He taught. If their authority with us is not absolute, it is not for lack of accord between them and their Master. It is only because they have made their Master so fully known to us, that we also know Him. As to what He said, as to what He did, as to what He meant, as to what He was, we can go no higher than their writings. And the only qualification on our acceptance of their word and our obedience to it is that which may be made in view of the fact that it is not to them we are responsible, but to the Master who sent them. Even in His own dealings with us He uses no compulsion, calls for no tame surrender, even to Himself, of the faculties with which He has created us. When He asks our adhesion, He bids us bring all these powers for ennobled use in the discernment of His mind and will and the practice of His service. The last word on the subject is His own word—"If any man willeth to do His will, He shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God" (John vii. 17).

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